



THE PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY

(Part of The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust)

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Admissions Criteria for 2025-2026

Introduction

The Palmer Catholic Academy is a mixed 11-18 Catholic voluntary aided academy under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Brentwood. The primary aim of the academy is the education of Catholic children. The education provided is intended to foster the growth of students' understanding and appreciation of their faith, as well as their understanding of human development. The Catholic faith is fostered and developed at The Palmer Catholic Academy in the context of respect for each individual's freedom and dignity.

Admissions Policy

The Governing Body of the academy is responsible for determining the academy's Admission Policy. In undertaking this responsibility, the Governors are guided by the requirements of the law as well as the advice of the Diocesan Trustees, and their duty to the academy and the Catholic community.

In consultation with Redbridge Local Authority and the Diocese of Brentwood, the Governing Body has set its planned admissions number of 192 students for the school year commencing September 2025.

Admissions Criteria

Within the normal range of an academy, the Governing Body will admit children of all abilities.

All applicants will need to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF).

For applicants wishing to be considered under the category Catholic, a Baptismal Certificate will be required.

In all cases, the relevant certificates or SIF must be returned to the academy no later than 31st October 2024.

Where no certificates or SIF are received the application will be considered in oversubscription criteria 2d according to residence and distance.

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be admitted to the academy if it is named on their Statement prior to the implementation of the over-subscription criteria.

Oversubscription

Should there be more applicants than places available the Governing Body will consider applications in the following order of priority:

NB: Please note that in all instances, it is the Catholicity of the child as opposed to the resident parent/carers that will determine the child's admission to the academy.

1. a) Looked after and previously looked after baptised Catholic children.
b) Baptised Catholics

Should there be more eligible applicants, in category 1(a-b), than places available, priority will be determined in the following order:

- (i) To baptised Catholic children who have a sibling attending the academy in Years 7-10 for the academic year 2024-2025.
 - (ii) To baptised Catholic children.
2. The Governing Body, having met its obligation to the Catholic Community, will offer any remaining places in the following order of priority:

Other Christian traditions, other faith and other applicants

- a) All other looked after and previously looked after children
- b) Children of other Christian traditions whose application is supported by a reference supplied by their Minister of Religion (completed SIF and a copy of the child's Baptism/Christening Certificate will be required)
- c) Children of other faiths whose application is supported by a religious leader¹
- d) Other applicants living nearest to the academy, as determined by the shortest walking distance to the applicant's home to the main entrance of the academy, measured by use of public highways and footpaths, excluding common land as calculated by the Local Authority Geographical Information System (GIS) (This is calculated to the main entrance of the academy in Aldborough Road South) living elsewhere

In each of the categories a-d above, priority will be given to applicants who have a brother or sister (sibling) currently attending the academy in Years 7 - 10, at the time of application and who will still be attending the academy in the academic year 2024-2025.

3. Tie Break Criteria

In the event of the need to have a tie break in any of the above oversubscription criteria then priority will be given as follows:

To children meeting the criteria living nearest to the academy, as determined by the shortest walking distance from the academy, measured by use of public highways and footpaths, excluding common land as calculated by the Local Authority Geographical Information System (GIS). This is calculated to the main entrance of the academy in Aldborough Road South.

NB: In using distance as a tie-breaker, should there be more than one applicant for a final place living an identical distance from the academy, the random allocation facility will be used from the Local Authority's (Redbridge) Tribal "Admissions and Transfers System" pupil data base.

¹ Supported by completed Supplementary Information Form

Waiting Lists

Our academy maintains a waiting list. Parents/carers who express a desire to be placed on the waiting list will be placed in order of priority in accordance with the published criteria. This will be maintained until the end of the autumn term, 31st December. After this time, parents/carers still wishing for their child to be considered will be asked to reaffirm their interest and a waiting list will then be drawn up in accordance with the admissions criteria. Please note that “In-Year Fair Access Protocol” admissions will take precedence over those on the waiting list as required.

NOTES: -

Late Applications

Applications received after 1st March will be considered in accordance to the admission criteria but not so as to prejudice decisions taken regarding those who did apply prior to this date.

Faith Applications

It is the responsibility of the applicant’s parents/carers to forward the Faith Information, i.e. Certificate of Baptism/Reception (copy), or Other Faith Reference information. In cases where no information is received, the application will be considered as a Non-Faith application under the appropriate section of the admission’s criteria.

Appeals against refusal of admission:

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 allows parents/carers to appeal against any decision made by or on behalf of the Governing Body in refusing their child admission to The Palmer Catholic Academy. Should any parent/carer wish to exercise this right they should, in the first instance, write to the Clerk to the Governing Body (Admissions Appeals) c/o the academy. Parents/carers will be provided with an Appeals Form on which they may state their case for appeal. The Appeals Panel will be made up of persons nominated by the London Borough of Redbridge and will not include any person who made, or took part in the discussion about, the refusal decision which is the subject of an appeal.

Parents/carers making an appeal will have the right to attend the appeal hearing to make their case orally. They may, if they wish, be accompanied by a friend.

Glossary of Definitions

Baptised Catholic

For the purpose of the admission process a Baptised Catholic is an applicant who has been baptised in accordance with the disciplines and rites of the Catholic Church. This is evidenced by a Certificate of Baptism in a Catholic Church or a Certificate of Reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

Certificate of Reception

Certificate confirming that the applicant has been received into the Church in accordance with the rites and disciplines of the Catholic Church.

Looked After Children

Looked after children are students as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989 i.e. any child in the care of the local authority or provided with accommodation by them e.g. children with foster parents. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order).

Sibling

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother/sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the academy place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

Definition of Permanent Residence

The residence at which a child lives with its birth parents, legal guardians or foster parent. That address will be considered to be the child's normal, permanent place of residence.

Where a child has parents who are separated, the parents may nominate only one address for the application process. If one parent has parental responsibility (as evidenced by documentation) that parent's address must be used. If both parents have parental responsibility (as evidenced by documentation) the Governing Body will normally accept a parent's address where the child resides for the majority of the academic week.

Parents/Family Members

A parent/family member is any person who has parental authority for or is the legal guardian of the child for whom the application is made.

Supplementary form

All parents/carers who list their preferred schools on the Local Authority's Common Application Form, preferably online, are regarded as having made valid applications. An additional or supplementary form may also have to be completed for applicants considered under the faith criteria of faith schools.

Distance

Applicants living nearest to the academy as determined by the shortest walking distance to the applicant's home to the main entrance of the academy, measured by use of public highways and footpaths, excluding common land as measured by the Local Authority Geographical Information System (G.I.S.). This is calculated to the main entrance of the academy in Aldborough Road South.