



St Thomas More Catholic High School is a six form, 11-18 bi-lateral school for boys, with a co-educational Sixth Form. The school was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children from Catholic families. The partnership between home, parish and school is the basis of the school's existence as a centre for the education of all Catholic boys of secondary age in the area. 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 governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and articles of association and always seeks to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide Catholic education for all our students and they are encouraged to enter wholeheartedly into the life of the school; to work hard, to respect the needs of others and to develop those skills and competencies that will be essential in their future lives.

As 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 inclusive ethos of the school, where all students participate in the religious life 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.

Admission limit for year 7 - 11: 180

The Governing Body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. To enable the school's Governing Body to apply its admissions criteria, it will be necessary for parents to complete the school's Supplementary Information Form (SIF) in addition to the Local Authority form.

The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round (this is for admission to the school at the start of the year in September and not for applications made in-year).

If at the time of admission there are more applications than there are places available, priority will always be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. Governors will apply the following oversubscription criteria to rank applications in priority order.

Oversubscription Criteria

- 1) Up to 30 places will be offered to boys who have passed the 11+ Exam Selective Test as administered by the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (of which the school is a founder member), and whose normal place of residence lies within the postcode areas of SS0, SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5, SS6, SS7, SS8 and SS9 (map below). If two or more boys tie for the final selective place, then it will be awarded using the oversubscription criteria.
- 2) "Looked after" boys from Catholic (see note III) families and boys who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted by Catholic families including those boys who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted by Catholic families (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

- 3) Baptised Catholic (note III) boys living in the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Leigh on Sea; St. Helen's, Westcliff on Sea; Sacred Heart, Southend on Sea; St. Georges, Shoebury; St. Peter's, Eastwood; St. John Fisher, Prittlewell; St. Teresa's, Rochford; Holy Family, South Benfleet; Our Lady of Ransom, Rayleigh and Our Lady of Canvey, Canvey Island.
- 4) Baptised Catholic (note III) boys.
- 5) Boys who attend an Assisi Catholic Trust Primary School namely Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School and Nursery, Leigh on Sea; St Helen's Catholic Primary School, Westcliff on Sea; Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery, Southend on Sea; St Georges Catholic Primary School, Shoeburyness; St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Rochford; Holy Family Catholic Primary School, South Benfleet; Our Lady of Ransom Catholic Primary School, Rayleigh and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Canvey Island.
- 6) Other "looked after" boys and boys who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted by families including those boys who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care because of being adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
- 7) Catechumens (Note IV) and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (Note V)
- 8) Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (Note VI)
- 9) Any other children, whose families desire a Catholic education for their son.

Notes:

Preference will be given within each category to

- I. Boys with a sibling* at the school or at St Bernard's at the time of admission
- II. Proximity of the child's home to the school as measured by Southend LA; those living closest to the school being accorded the highest priority. In the case of over subscription in any one category "straight line" distance will be used to measure the distance between the pupil's home (including community entrance to flats) and the nearest pupil entrance to the school. If the pupil's home is a flat the distance will be measured to the main external entrance of the building. If the same distance is shared by more than one pupil and only one place is available, the place will be awarded on the basis of a computerised random allocation process (supervised by someone independent of the Council/Governing body).
- III. '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 who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family). For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of baptism 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.
- IV. 'Catechumen' means a member of the catechumenate of Catholic Church. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.

- V. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.
- VI. 'Children of other Christ 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 CYTUN 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.

*The definition of sibling being:

Siblings are considered to be a brother or sister, half brother or half sister, step-brother or step-sister, adopted brother or sister, living at the same address, who attends St Thomas More High School or St Bernard's High School at the time of application with reasonable expectation that they will be attending at the time of proposed admission.

Explanatory notes for admission arrangements:

Looked after children and Previously looked after children – Children who are in the care of local authorities as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to the school'. 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 arrangements order or special guardianship order).

Looked after and previously looked after children are given the appropriate priority for each relevant age group in line with the admission criteria.

Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) and Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) - A Statement of Special Educational Need is a statement made by the local authority under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision required for that child. If the school is oversubscribed, the admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan where the school is named in the Statement or Plan, is mandatory.

Distance where parents share care

The distance is measured the same for all applications. Only one application can be received. The LA should not have the details of both parents or know of the marital status of the parents. If more than one application is received from parents, applications will be placed on hold until such time that:

- an application is made that both parents agree to; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents; or
- a court order is obtained confirming which parent's application takes precedence'.

Details on address checks and which address is relevant are also provided in the admission booklet. In all cases the child's normal place of residence is applicable for the purposes of the application

Waiting lists

Children's names will automatically be on the waiting list for the school if the school is a higher preference than the offer made and a place has been refused.

Waiting lists for all year groups are held for the full school year. Each added child will require the list to be

ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority must not be given to children based on the date their application was received or their name was added to the list.

Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol, must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Over and Under age applications

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

Details are provided in the Admission Scheme 2025/26 for the main rounds and requests submitted from parents are coordinated by the LA and follow the requirements in the School Admissions Code. Applications for over or under age applications in-year will be handled in line with the School Admissions Code 2021, 2.18-2.20.

Such requests for Schools in Southend-on-Sea are made directly to the school and the school advises the LA of their decision. Requests for year 6 must have been submitted by the parent and considered by the admission authority before the closing date for applications to year 7, i.e. 31st October of any given year. Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

This will include documenting the following:-

- the parent's views;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.
- They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned.

When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority must set out clearly the reasons for their decision. (2.19 School Admissions Code 2021)

In circumstances where a child transfers from another school already 'outside of normal age group', the school will support any over or under age application where the above has been met and the school is satisfied that the child should continue to be educated out of normal age group.

Home Address

For all applications the address used will be the child's habitual normal place of residence as at the closing date for applications, i.e., 31st October. Changes to address will be updated after all on time applications have been processed.

