



Sacred Heart High School

ADMISSIONS POLICY (SIXTH FORM)

Academic Year 2026-27

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The School

Sacred Heart is a Catholic 11-18 comprehensive school for girls within the Trusteeship of the Society of the Sacred Heart. The school was founded by the Society in 1893 has always sought to promote the education of women and academic excellence.

The school has academy status and its Governing Board is the Admission Authority for the school.

1.2 Admissions Policy

This admissions policy relates to all admissions to Year 12 for girls starting in September 2026.

Numbered footnotes appear throughout this policy, providing further clarification on the definition of various words and phrases. The clarification notes can be found in Section 8.

There is a separate admissions policy for Years 7-11.

1.3 Internal Candidates

Students who are already on the roll in Year 11 at the school will simply transfer to Year 12 if they meet the academic entry requirements for sixth form courses.

The academic entry requirements are the same for Sacred Heart students as they are for external candidates. Year 11 students at Sacred Heart High School will follow the school's internal application procedures.

1.4 Number of Places in Year 12

There are 120 places in Year 12 of which 20 are set aside for external applicants.

The Published Admission Number (PAN) of places for external candidates to join Year 12, is 20.

The Governing Board has discretion to admit more external students than the PAN where the uptake from internal Year 11 students is lower than expected. This means that there may be more places available for external candidates than indicated above, once the uptake from Year 11 students is known.

The school will not admit fewer external students than the PAN if the uptake from Year 11 students is higher than expected.

1.5 Twins and Children of Multiple Births

Where a place is achieved by a twin or child of a multiple birth but there are no remaining places for their twin or multiple birth sisters, the school will admit the remaining twin or multiple birth sisters over the Published Admission Number where the remaining twin or multiple birth sisters meet the minimum entry requirement for the agreed course of study.

2 MINIMUM ACADEMIC ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CANDIDATES

Please refer to the school's Sixth Form Curriculum Guide 2026 as part of the Schools annual prospectus for full details of the entry requirements for the Sixth form both internal and external applicants.

3 EQUALITY

After the initial academic entry criteria are met, the school does **not** select candidates based on ability or aptitude. Candidates achieving grades which are higher than the minimum academic entry requirements set out above will **not** be given higher priority than those achieving the minimum entry requirements at lower grades. Places will be allocated to candidates achieving the minimum academic entry requirements in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

4 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR YEAR 12 EXTERNAL CANDIDATES ONLY

Where the school receives more applications from external candidates who have achieved the minimum academic entry requirements, than there are places available, places will be allocated in the following order of priority:

Criterion 1: Catholic Looked After & Previously Looked After Girls including girls adopted from state care outside England with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

Catholic¹ *looked after*² girls and *previously looked after*² Catholic girls including girls adopted from state care outside England with a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

Criterion 2: Catholic Girls with a Certificate of Catholic Practice

Catholic¹ girls with a Certificate of Catholic Practice³

Criterion 3: Catholic Girls without a Certificate of Catholic Practice

Catholic² girls without a Certificate of Catholic Practice⁷

Criterion 4: Any other Looked After & Previously Looked After Girls including girls adopted from state care outside England.

Girls who are **not** Catholic¹ who are *looked after*² girls and *previously looked after*² girls including girls adopted from state care outside England.

Criterion 5: Any other girls.

Any other girls.

5 PRIORITISING WITHIN OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERION GROUPS

5.1 The Random Allocation Process

If there are more external girls that meet the entry requirements in any oversubscription criterion group than places available, the places within that group would be allocated on the basis of random allocation.

The random allocation process is carried out electronically by an organisation wholly independent from the school. The independent organisation would create a random order for applicants and places will be awarded in this order.

6 EXTERNAL APPLICATIONS FOR YEAR 12

6.1 Availability of information

The Sixth Form Prospectus, Course Handbook and Admission to Year 12 (External Candidates) Form will be available on the school website.

6.2 Application

External candidates must complete the External Candidates Application Form. External candidates must also submit the Predicted Grades sheet which should be signed, dated and stamped by their current school.

The application deadline for submission of applications for admission to Year 12 (with all other necessary documents) is 4.00pm on Thursday, 27th November 2025.

6.3 Open Session

Candidates should attend an Open Session in the Autumn Term of Year 11 at which the procedures for application and the entry requirements will be explained. The Sixth Form Course Handbook will outline the courses to be offered and will be distributed. Attendance at the Open Session is not compulsory and does not form part of entry requirements but will be helpful for candidates.

6.4 Course Suitability Meeting

External candidates who have the required level of predicted grades will be invited to visit the school to meet with members of staff to discuss the courses they wish to study. The ethos and expectations of life in the sixth form will be explained at this meeting. This meeting is not an interview and its outcome will play no part in the decision to offer a place to a candidate, but will be helpful for candidates in deciding which courses and course combinations they wish to apply for.

6.5 Conditional Offers

The Governing Board will make conditional offers to candidates for whom the required level of predicted grades have been confirmed by their current school where there are spaces in the courses offered, applying the oversubscription criteria where necessary.

Where a candidate has not been successful in achieving an offer, it may be possible to offer a different combination of subjects from those applied for.

Candidates will have five school days to confirm whether they have accepted the conditional offer of a place.

6.6 Examination Results

Candidates must provide the school with their GCSE result slips on the day that they are published to enable their conditional offer of a place to be confirmed.

The Governing Board will then make final offers of places to candidates who have achieved or bettered the minimum academic entry requirements, applying the oversubscription criteria as necessary, and will withdraw conditional offers where the candidate did not achieve their predicted grades.

6.7 Late Applications

The Governing Board will consider late applications received during the summer holidays and at the beginning of the Autumn Term. Candidates can be admitted where places remain available up until 2 October 2026.

6.8 Sixth Form Waiting List

After the date that GCSE results are published, candidates whose achieved grades are at the required level but who did not achieve an offer of a place will be placed on Sixth Form Waiting List which will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above.

6.9 Statutory Right of Appeal

Candidates who were unsuccessful in achieving a place have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal. Full details of how to appeal, including the deadline by which the appeal must be submitted, will be included within the refusal letter.

7 APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION OUTSIDE NORMAL AGE GROUP

Candidates who want to be admitted to a year other than with their normal age group must apply directly to the Governing Board.

Candidates must obtain an Application for Admission of a Child Outside Normal Age Group Form by downloading it from the school's website or from the school's office. The completed, signed and dated form must be submitted to the school, together with supporting evidence from the candidate's current school as soon as possible before the application deadline. An application for admission must also be submitted in the usual way, as set out above.

8 DEFINITIONS & CLARIFICATION

These definitions form part of the Oversubscription Criteria

Note 1: Catholic

'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 full communion with the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy this includes a looked after child in the process of adoption and living with a Catholic family, where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised were it not for his/her status as a looked after child. For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception in the Catholic 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 law of the Church.

Note 2: Looked After, Previously Looked After

'Looked after' child has the same meaning as in S.22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents at the time of making an application to the school.) Looked after status will normally be evidenced by a letter from the girl's social worker, which confirm her legal status.

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 a Special Guardianship Order. Previously looked after status will normally be evidenced by a letter from the girls's social worker or an adoption certificate. Girls or applicants '**previously in state care outside England**' refers to those who have been looked after outside England by a public authority, a religious organisation or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society, for example an orphanage. Parents will be asked to provide evidence which demonstrates their child is eligible

for priority under this criterion. Such evidence may include an adoption order. It is recognised that it may not be straightforward to establish that a child was in state care outside England. In such cases, the Governors will exercise professional judgement and common sense to determine eligibility

‘Adopted’ is any child who has been formally adopted from care and whose parent/guardian can give proof of legal adoption.

‘Special Guardianship Order’ is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.14A appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian(s). Children ‘looked after’ immediately prior to the granting of the order qualify under this category.

‘Child Arrangements Order’ is an order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 s.8 settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Children ‘looked after’ immediately prior to the granting of the order qualify under this category.

Note 3: Certificate of Catholic Practice

‘Certificate of Catholic Practice’ means a certificate issued by the family’s parish priest (or the priest in charge of the church where the family attends Mass) in the form laid down by the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

It will be issued if the priest is satisfied that at least one Catholic parent or carer (along with the child, if she is over seven years old) have (except when it was impossible to do so) attended Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation for **at least five years** (or, in the case of the child, since the age of seven, if shorter).

It will also be issued when the practice has been continuous since being received into the Church if that occurred less than five years ago. It is expected that most Certificates will be issued on the basis of attendance.

A Certificate may also be issued by the priest when attendance is interrupted by exceptional circumstances which excuse from the obligation to attend on that occasion or occasions. Further details of these circumstances can be found in the guidance issued to priests: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education/governors/admissions>

CHECKLIST

- Have you read the Admissions Policy and procedures for this school? Yes/No
- Have you completed the correct Application Form - either an Internal Application or an External Application? Yes/No
- Have you completed the Subject Choices Form? Yes/No
- Is the Predicted Examinations sheet completed and signed by the Headteacher/Senior Member of Staff or designated Staff Member at your current school? Yes/No

(Additionally for external Catholic candidates only):

- Have you provided a photocopy of your baptism certificate? Yes/No
- Have you provided evidence of your Reception into the Catholic Church if you were previously baptised into another Christian Faith? Yes/No
- Have you provided a copy of the Certificate of Catholic Practice? Yes/No