



St Bernard's High School

ADMISSIONS POLICY
2024-2025

ADMISSION AT AGE 11

St Bernard's High School is a six form, 11-18 bi-lateral school for girls with a co-educational Sixth Form. The school serves the Catholic community of Southend and South East Essex. The partnership between home, parish and school is the basis of the school's existence as a centre for the education of all Catholic girls of secondary age in the area.

The aim of the school is to recognise and develop the potential of each student. The school provides a full and balanced curriculum which encourages the intellectual and personal development of all students.

The staff are committed to the progress of all students, setting targets with them and supporting achievement through active learning and teaching.

Students are encouraged to enter wholeheartedly into the life of the school; to work hard, to respect the needs of others; and develop those skills and competencies that will be essential in their future lives.

St Bernard's is a forward-looking school with a strong and successful tradition of Christian education and inclusive ethos where all students participate in the religious life of the school.

Admission limit for Years 7-11: 175; for Years 12-13: 200 students in total across the 6th form

THE ALLOCATION OF PLACES

Up to 63 selective places will be offered to girls who have passed the 11+ Exam Selective Test as administered by the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex and whose normal place of residence lies within the priority area (see map in section 11, below). If two or more girls tie for the final selective place, then it will be awarded using the oversubscription criteria.

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. Where appropriate, the SIF should be supported by a Certificate of Catholic Practice obtained from the applicant's Parish Priest (or another Priest who knows the family well).

Applications which are not supported by a completed Supplementary Information Form will fall into Category J of the oversubscription criteria.

If at the time of admission there are more applications than there are places the Governors will apply the following oversubscription criteria to rank applications in priority order. Non-Selective places will be offered to bring the total intake for the year to 175.

Oversubscription Criteria

- A) Catholic children in public care or who were previously in public care (see explanatory note 1)
- B) Practising* Catholic girls living in the following parishes, whose application is supported by a Certificate of Catholic Practice from their Parish Priest: Our Lady of Lourdes, Leigh-on-Sea; St. Helen's, Westcliff-on-Sea; Sacred Heart, Southend-on-Sea; St. Teresa's, Rochford; St. George's, Shoebury; St. Peter's, Eastwood; St. John Fisher, Prittlewell; Holy Family, South Benfleet; Our Lady of Ransom, Rayleigh and Our Lady of Canvey, Canvey Island.

- C) Other practising Catholic girls whose application is supported by a Certificate of Catholic Practice from their Parish Priest.
- D) Baptised Catholics whose application is not supported by a Certificate of Catholic Practice from their Parish Priest.
- E) Other children in public care or who were previously in public care (see explanatory notes below)
- F) Girls of the Eastern Orthodox Church*** and whose normal place of residence lies within the priority area (see map attached) whose application is supported by their priest.
- G) Practising Christian girls attending Catholic Primary schools, whose application is supported in writing by their Minister.
- H) Practising Christian girls whose normal place of residence lies within the priority area (see map attached) and whose application is supported in writing by their Minister.
- I) Non-Christian girls whose normal place of residence lies within the priority area (see map attached) and whose application is supported in writing by their local religious leader
- J) Applications from girls who do not fall into the above categories.

Notes:

Preference will be given within each of the above categories according to the following criteria:-

- i) girls with a sibling** at the school or at St. Thomas More High School, Westcliff at the time of admission.
- ii) proximity of the child's home to the school, as measured by the shortest route; those living closest to the school being accorded the highest priority.
Where a child resides at more than one address the distance will be measured using the address where they reside for the majority of the time.

Definitions:

*Practising—to meet the term practising the minister who supplies the letter in support of the application must indicate that the child is practising her faith. For practising Catholic children this is a Certificate of Catholic Practice from their Parish Priest.

**A sibling is defined as the full, half, step, adopted and long term fostered siblings at St Bernard's High School or St. Thomas More High School who reside in the same household at the time of admission.

*** The status of Eastern Orthodox Churches, solely for the purpose of admission to St Bernard's High school, are listed at <https://www.stbernardswestcliff.org.uk/page/?title=Admissions&pid=43>

In the case of over subscription in any one category “straight line” distance will be used to measure between the pupil's home 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 one sibling (as defined above) from a multiple birth gains a place, the other(s) will be admitted automatically, even if this means the published admission number will be exceeded. Similarly if two children were eligible for the last place and they lived precisely the same distance from the school, both would be admitted.

Proof of Baptism—in order to apply the admissions criteria fairly proof of baptism will be required.

Catholic children baptised in parishes other than the named parishes (criteria B) and all other Christian children will be required to include a copy of their Baptismal Certificate, if appropriate, with their application. In the named parishes confirmation of Baptism will be sought from the Parish Priest at the same time as a Certificate of Catholic Practice.

Explanatory notes for admission arrangements:

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children

Pupils in public care and children that were previously in public care (including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted)

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

A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

Refer to section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special Guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

2. 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.

3. Distance where parents have separated

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

4. Waiting Lists

Waiting lists: Lists for each intake year are kept for students wishing to remain on our waiting list. Admission, if a vacancy becomes available, is strictly in the order of the admissions criteria. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

5. 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.

To request admission out of normal age group during the transfer process of year 6 to 7:-

To request admission out of usual age group applicants must write to the local authority with their request. The local authority will share the details of the request with the school. Parents will be notified of the outcome before the allocation of places and must apply during the main round for the usual age group.

To request admission out of normal age group in-year:

To request admission out of usual age group applicants must write to the Head Teacher with their request. The Head Teacher will advise accordingly and will ensure that a formal written outcome is provided.

6. 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.

7. In-Year Admissions

To apply for a Year 7 school place after the normal admission cycle or for admission into Years 8-11, parents will need to complete an In-Year application form and Supplementary Information Form (both available from the school and school website).

8. Appeals

Appeals against a decision of the Governors should be addressed to the Correspondent to the Governors within 2 weeks of the receipt of the decision. These appeals will be considered by an Independent Appeals Committee, before which parents are entitled to attend. 504 applications were received for the Year 7 places for September 2023. TBA appeals were lodged and the Appeals Committee granted TBA places.

9. Admission to the Sixth Form

Prospective Sixth Form students are encouraged to visit the school in the autumn term of their Year 11 studies.

Application details, including a prospectus, can be obtained via the school website. The closing date for application is the final day of the Autumn term in Year 11.

Late applicants will be considered at any time up to the end of the Spring term of Year 11; however, it should be noted that for late applications some courses may already be full.

Students should complete the appropriate application form and return it to the school by the deadline published. Up to 25 students per year group can be accepted into the Sixth Form from other schools in addition to those students in Year 11 at St. Bernard's High School.

Our Sixth Form entry requirement is to achieve a grade in GCSE English and Mathematics that does not require a re-sit, in addition to meeting the individual subjects' entrance requirements.

Places on A Level courses can, subject to availability, normally be offered to applicants who meet the individual subjects' entrance requirements. The minimum subject course requirement is usually an 8, 7 or 6 grade at GCSE in the subject or a related subject. The detailed course guide gives the information for each subject course and can be obtained from the school website.

10. Priority Area Map for St Bernard's High School

Drill down map and post code list are available on www.southend.gov.uk/admissions