

ST LEONARD'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL, DURHAM

ADMISSION POLICY 2027-28

St Leonard's Catholic 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 these admission arrangements.

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round excluding admission to year 12. The admission authority has set the school's Published Admissions Number ("PAN") at **232** pupils to year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2027.

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

Catholic Feeder Primary Schools

- Our Lady Queen of Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, Durham
- St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Sacriston
- St Benet's Catholic Primary School, Ouston
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Chester-le-Street
- St Godric's Catholic Primary School, Durham
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Gilesgate
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Ushaw Moor
- St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Esh Laude
- St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Langley Moor
- St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Belmont

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

At any time 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. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school. (see note 3)
3. Other 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. Other children who attend a Catholic feeder primary school.

7. Other children who have an older brother or sister at the school at the time of admission (see note 8)
8. Children of a member of School Staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which application for admission to the school is made. (see note 10)
9. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 7)
10. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
11. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (i) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 11)
- (ii) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment 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 after children in (i) above. (see note 8)

Tie Break

Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distance will be measured in a straight line (as the crow flies) from the front door of the child's address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school, (using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system) with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round, you must complete a Common Application Form, excluding admission to year 12, available from the local authority in which you live.

If you are required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the admissions authority following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications. If you do not provide the supplemental evidence, this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on **1 March 2027** 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.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is **31 October 2025**.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with your home Local Authority Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. You are encouraged to ensure that your application is received on time.

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.

Any such request should be made in writing to the head teacher of the school at the same time as the admission application is made. The admission authority 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 into account the views of the head teacher, including the head teacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, unsuccessful children will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list 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 in 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 admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Applications should be made to the school by contacting the Head Teacher at St Leonard's Catholic School, North End, Durham, DH1 4NG. [<https://stleonardsdurham.bwcet.com/>].

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.

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 locally agreed protocols. 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 PAN.

False Evidence

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

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 an 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. Included in this definition are those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and who 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.

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 7 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:
 - (i) 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
 - (ii) the child of a parent's partner where that child for whom the school place is sought lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.
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. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the admission authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.
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, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.

ADMISSION TO SIXTH FORM 2027-28

Admission to the Sixth Form

The admissions authority has set its published admission number (PAN) at 148 pupils to year 12 in the school year which begins in September 2027.

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.

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external 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 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.

Where there is a space in year 13 i.e. where there are fewer than [xx] pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Entry requirements

Any student failing to achieve at least a grade 4 in GCSE English and/or Mathematics will be required to undertake a re-sit course in Year 12.

We will not offer places to current St Leonard's students or external applicants who fail to meet the entry requirements and for whom no reasonable programme of study can be arranged.

- (i) **Advanced Level Study (Route A)**
The entry requirements for Advanced Level study are:
 - (a) each applicant must achieve at least eight GCSE or equivalent Level 2 Qualification passes at grade 9 – 1
 - (b) each applicant must achieve at least five GCSE passes¹ at grade 9 – 4
 - (c) each applicant must achieve at least four GCSE grade 5 passes including at least a grade 5 in each subject to be taken at A Level (see course entry requirements listed in section 6 of this admissions policy).
 - (d) any applicant wishing to study a science subject (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) at A Level must achieve at least a grade 5 in GCSE Additional Science if taking double science rather than separate sciences. If taking separate sciences then the applicant must achieve at least a grade 5 in the science subject to be taken at A Level.
 - (e) any applicant wishing to study a subject at A that they are not currently studying at GCSE must consult the list of entry requirements listed in section 6 of this admissions policy.
 - (f) any applicant currently studying a subject at GCSE that they wish to continue to study at A must achieve at least a grade 5 in that subject at GCSE.

¹ For Route A entry to A Level study, equivalent Level 2 Qualifications are **not** accepted under the terms of this Admissions Policy. The five GCSE passes at grade A*-C must be achieved in full GCSE courses.

- (g) any applicant failing to achieve at least a grade 5 in GCSE English and/or Mathematics undertake a re-sit course in Year 12
- (h) each applicant must study a minimum of three A Level courses to completion.
- (i) each applicant must study the General Religious Education Course to completion²

(ii) BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma Study (Route B)

The entry requirements for the BTEC Extended Diploma study are:

- (a) each applicant must achieve at least eight GCSE or equivalent Level 2 Qualification passes at grade 9 – 1
- (b) each applicant must achieve at least four GCSE or equivalent Level 2 at grade 9 – 4
- (c) any applicant failing to achieve at least a grade 5 in GCSE English and/or Mathematics undertake a re-sit course in Year 12.
- (d) each applicant must study the General Religious Education Course to completion
- (e) each applicant must undertake the work experience of this course, as arranged.

(iii) BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma Study + ONE A Level Course (Route B+)

The entry requirements for the BTEC Extended Diploma under Route B+ study are:

- (a) each applicant must achieve at least eight GCSE or equivalent Level 2 Qualification passes at grade 9 – 1
- (b) each applicant must achieve at least four GCSE at grade 9 - 4 (please note that equivalent Level 2 Qualification passes are not acceptable under Route B+)
- (c) any applicant failing to achieve at least a grade 5 in GCSE English and/or Mathematics undertake a re-sit course in Year 12.
- (d) each applicant must study the General Religious Education Course to completion
- (e) for the A Level course the applicant **MUST** achieve grade 5 or higher in the chosen subject grade 5

Please note: that not all A Level Courses may be available under Route B+.

- (iv)** If the entry requirements have not been met due to an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child the admissions authority will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

The evidence will need to demonstrate why a place specifically at St Leonard's Sixth Form, or on a specific course, is in the student's best interest. The Governors will consider the evidence submitted to them, also taking into consideration the ability of the school to meet the individual's need. On the basis of the case presented to them, the Governors will decide whether or not the pupil is eligible for admission.

² Students who choose to study A Level Religious Studies are not required to study the NOCN General Religious Education Course.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)

See page 1.

Oversubscription Criteria (for external applicants)

At any time 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. Catholic looked after and previously looked after students. (see notes 2&3)
2. Other Catholic students. (see note 3)
3. Other looked after and previously looked after students. (see note 2)
4. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
5. Students who will have a sibling at St Leonard's during the academic year 2025
6. Students of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 6)
7. Students of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
8. Any other students.

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

- (iii) Where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the student which can be most appropriately met at this school, the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made. (see note 10)
- (iv) The attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of enrolment 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 after students in (i) above. (see note 8)

Tie Break

See page 2.

Application Procedures and Timetable

The sixth form is available for all existing pupils subject to pupils fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses. Remaining places in the sixth form of the school will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, subject to applicants fulfilling the individual requirements of suitable courses.

To apply for a place at this school, the parent must complete an application form available from the main office at the school, or from the school website. The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application by the school.

If you are required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the admissions authority following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications. If you do not provide the supplemental evidence, this may affect your child's chance of being offered a place.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 30 March 2026.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 20 July 2026 or the next working day, by the local authority on our behalf. If you are unsuccessful (unless your student 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.

The annual Sixth Form Opening Evening gives both internal and external students the opportunity to discover more about the Sixth Form. The evening for 2026 applications is due to take place in October 2025. This evening is comprised of a short introductory presentation from the Head Teacher, and the Head of Year (Sixth Form) as well as an opportunity to meet departmental staff. The formal application process begins following the Sixth Form Open Evening.

Late applications

considered by the Governors and included in the admissions procedure at the point when they are received. Each individual case will be considered by the Deputy Head Teacher in consultation with the Head Teacher. No application submitted after the submission deadline 30 June 2026 can be guaranteed a place in Year 12 for that year of application.

Admission of Students outside their Normal Age Group

See page 3.

Waiting List

For any student who has been refused admission due to oversubscription in the Sixth Form or on a particular course, a waiting list is available until 31 December 2025 where priority will be given according to the above criteria based on the information provided at the time of application.

Further enquiries should be directed to the Deputy Head Teacher. A Sixth Form prospectus is available.

Students who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the Chair of Governors at the school address.

Course changes are only permitted at the discretion of the Head of Year in consultation with the Deputy Head Teacher and in consultation with the appropriate Heads of Department. No course changes will be permitted after 30th September in the year of admission.

CONTINUATION REQUIREMENTS

It is envisaged that all students admitted into Year 12 in September 2025 will continue at St Leonard's until the end of Year 13 in June 2026.

Year 12 criteria (Route A)

The following criteria must be met in order to ensure continuation on route A:

- a. students must achieve at least a grade E in each of their internal exams
- b. students must work effectively towards their target grades as given at the beginning of each academic year
- c. students must demonstrate their commitment by maintaining a minimum 90% attendance

- d. students must meet St Leonard's high expectations of behaviour and commitment in accordance with the Sixth Form Learning Agreement and the policies detailed in the Sixth Form planner app.

Year 12 criteria (Routes B and Route B+)

The following criteria must be met in order to ensure continuation on route B:

- a. students must meet the pass criteria for their chosen course of study in each of the Year 12 units covered.
- b. students must work effectively towards their minimum target as given at the beginning of each academic year
- c. students must demonstrate their commitment to study by maintaining a minimum 90% attendance
- d. students must meet St Leonard's high expectations of behaviour and commitment in accordance with the Sixth Form Learning Agreement and the policies detailed in the Sixth Form planner app.

Any student on Route B+ must meet the above criteria (a) – (d) for the BTEC element of their Programme of Study and students must achieve at least a grade E in their chosen A Level course.

Year 13 criteria

The following criteria must be met during the Year 13 in order to ensure continuation:

- a. students must work effectively towards their target as given at the beginning of each academic year
- b. student must demonstrate their commitment to study by maintaining a minimum 90% attendance
- c. students must meet St Leonard's high expectations of behaviour and commitment in accordance with the Sixth Form Learning Agreement and the policies detailed in the Sixth Form planner app.

In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a student at any time outside the normal admission round and the student will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made to the school by contacting Jane Bird on jbird@stl.bwcet.com

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 student 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.

Fair Access Protocol, False Evidence & Notes

See page 4.