

## Admissions checklist document for VA schools

Please answer the following question about your admissions policy oversubscription criteria. If any of the questions elicit responses which require a change to your admissions policy and oversubscription criteria, then please consult with the diocese regarding any changes and then conduct a formal admissions consultation to amend your admissions policy between 1<sup>st</sup> October – 31<sup>st</sup> January.

Above all, oversubscription criteria should be **fair, lawful and objective**. (School Admissions Code 2014)

### Questions (for further clarification of these points, please see footnotes)

1. Are applicants in possession of an EHCP granted an automatic place?
2. Is the term EHCP clearly defined?
3. Are LAC and PLAC children given first-priority places?
4. Are the terms LAC and PLAC clearly defined?
5. Is there a geographical area of 'catchment'?
6. How is this geographical area defined?<sup>1</sup>
7. How are siblings treated in oversubscription criteria?
8. Is there a difference between siblings in-catchment (as defined in the policy) and out-of-catchment (as defined in the policy)?
9. Do you have a faith criteria?
10. Does your faith criteria include Christian and other world faiths?
11. Are any other world faiths which apply to your criteria clearly defined?
12. Does your faith criteria include the word church?

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<sup>1</sup> If this is a parish boundary, how is this defined in clear terms to parents? List of street names? Map as defined by Church Near You website? Postcode areas CB7 / CB3 / CB23 / PE2 etc?

13. How is the word church defined?<sup>2</sup>
14. Does the faith criteria include a clear frequency of attendance at church?<sup>3</sup>
15. How is 'church attendance' defined?<sup>4</sup>
16. Does the faith criteria include a clear duration for attendance at church?<sup>5</sup>
17. Does the faith criteria include a clear definition of the period of time to be counted for attendance purposes?<sup>6</sup>
18. Does your faith criteria now include the set wording to incorporate COVID-19 church closures and any future closures?
19. Do you have a Supplementary Information Form (SIF)?<sup>7</sup>
20. How is the SIF accessed?
21. Where should the SIF be sent? Is this clearly stated in the faith criteria?
22. Does your SIF have an objective list of faith criteria (church affiliation / frequency and duration of church attendance as defined in your policy) for a member of clergy / minister / elder to tick?
23. Are staff members included in your oversubscription criteria?
24. Is the qualifying duration of service of a member of staff clearly and objectively defined?

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<sup>2</sup> This may be defined as Church of England Church / other Christian Church. Named churches are not recommended, but you may wish to state 'any Church of England Church within the Parish of XYZ, (geographical area as defined in the admissions policy)' then 'any other Christian Church within the parish of XYZ, (geographical area as defined in the admissions policy). Churches Together in Britain and Ireland request NOT to be included in admissions criteria, as they are nationally recognised and do not cover all local Christian churches, however suitable wording might be 'In these criteria 'other Christian church' can mean a church which is Designated as such, nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, or locally by the diocesan bishop, or which is a member of Churches Together in England, or affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance, or a Partner Church of Affinity'

<sup>3</sup> Recommended is monthly attendance. School Governing Bodies may, in certain circumstances wish to impose a higher level of attendance (fortnightly), or a specific number of attendances e.g. no fewer than 15 attendances in one year or no fewer than 8 attendances in one year. The latter is not recommended by the Church of England Education Office. Please note that the terms frequently or regularly are non-compliant and must be defined empirically. Please also note that level of involvement in church life is considered to be an unfair measure. The only lawful measure is attendance at public worship.

<sup>4</sup> This is physical attendance at an act of public worship.

<sup>5</sup> Usual duration would be one year. Heavily oversubscribed schools may choose two years here.

<sup>6</sup> i.e. 'Attendance is taken into consideration for the 12 months directly preceding the admissions deadline date.'

<sup>7</sup> This is compulsory when including faith criteria. It requires an objective tick box form for a member of clergy to complete. A letter from the member of clergy which may include subjective elements is deemed to be non-compliant.