



# THE PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY

(Part of The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust)

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## THE PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY ADMISSION POLICY 2026-2027

The Palmer Catholic Academy 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 academy is conducted by its academy trust company, The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust, 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 academy, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our students. As a Catholic academy, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the academy's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the academy's education be fully supported by all families in the academy. We therefore hope that all parents/carers will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the academy. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the academy in accordance with these admission arrangements.

The academy is part of The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust which is the admission authority and has responsibility for admissions to this academy. Responsibility for the day to day running of admissions to The Palmer Catholic Academy has been delegated to the local governing body. The local authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round<sup>1</sup> (excluding admission to year 12). The admission authority has set the academy's Published Admissions Number ("PAN") at 192 students for year 7 and 10 students for external applicants to year 12 in the school year which begins in September 2026.

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 academy's PAN.

### Admission to the Sixth-Form

The academy operates a sixth form for a total of 240 students. 120 places overall will be available in year 12. While the admission number is 10 for external applicants, if fewer than 110 of the academy's existing students transfer into year 12, additional external students will be admitted until year 12 meets its capacity of 120.

Both internal and external students wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the sixth form. These are that students will have achieved at least 5 9\*-5 GCSEs.

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<sup>1</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year

In addition to the sixth form's minimum academic entry requirements, students 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 prospectus and on the academy's website at <https://www.tpc.academy/sixth-form/courses-on-offer/>.

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 the academy receives an application to join Year 13 from an applicant who meets the relevant academic criteria and there is a space in that year group i.e. where there are fewer than 120 students in the year group, the academy may admit additional students up to this number provided that doing so will not prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

#### **Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (see note 1)**

The admission of students 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 academy 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**

*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. (see note 3)
3. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
4. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
5. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion. (see note 6)
6. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader. (see note 7)
7. Any other children.

***Within each of the categories listed above, the following provision will be applied.***

- (i) The attendance of a brother or sister at the academy 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 (see note 8).

### **Tie Break**

Priority will be given to children living closest to the academy determined by the shortest distance. Distances are calculated **by the shortest walking distance from the academy, measured by use of public highways and footpaths, excluding common land as calculated by the Local Authority Geographical Information System (GIS). This is calculated to the main entrance of the academy in Aldborough Road South.** 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 and supervised by a person independent of the academy. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this academy in the normal admission round<sup>2</sup>, you **must** complete a Common Application Form (excluding admission to year 12) available from the local authority in which you live. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to the Attendance and Admissions Officer, at [office@tpc.academy](mailto:office@tpc.academy) or delivered to the academy by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

Year 12 Applications – Once the number of current Year 11 students transferring to Year 12 is known, it may be possible for the academy to admit external candidates over the PAN. External candidates should not, therefore, be deterred from applying for a place.

Current Year 11 students will complete an online application form, which can be found at <https://thepalmercatholicacademy.applicaa.com/12> in order to confirm their course choices and predicted grades. External candidates must formally apply for admission to Year 12 by completing an application form which will then be processed in accordance with the Admissions Code 2021. Online application forms should be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1<sup>st</sup> **March** 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.

***If you do not provide the information required in the SIF and return it by the closing date, together with all supporting documentation, your child may not be placed in criteria 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 and 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 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 or 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026 for Sixth Form.**

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<sup>2</sup> This is for admission to the school at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

## **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 Attendance and Admissions Officer, at [office@tpc.academy](mailto:office@tpc.academy) 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 Headteacher, including the Headteacher's statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the academy, the admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

## **Children of UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants**

The academy will accept applications for the admission of the children of UK Armed Forces Personnel with a confirmed posting in the area of the academy, or the children of Crown Servants returning from overseas to live in the area of the academy, in advance of them arriving. These children do not have to be living at the stated home address at the application deadline, as all other children do.

The application for admission must be supported by an official letter declaring the relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address, which will be used as the child's home address for the purpose of applying this Admission Policy.

## **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 academy'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 normal admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Application should be made to the academy by contacting the Attendance and Admissions Officer at [office@tpc.academy](mailto:office@tpc.academy). Please also see our [website](#).

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 academy 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.

**The admission authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the academy, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or 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 arrangement 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 6 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 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. 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.