

GRAYS CONVENT HIGH SCHOOL

DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



CATHOLIC SECONDARY ADMISSION POLICY 2025/2026



Grays Convent High School was founded by the La Sainte Union Sisters 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 Governing Body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and instrument of government 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 the admission arrangements.

The Governing Body of Grays Convent High School 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. The Governing Body has set its admission number at 124 girls to year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2025.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Girls with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or 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. (See Note 1)

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 girls. (see note 2)
2. Catholic girls who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, Grays; St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Stanford le Hope; Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, South Ockendon; St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Tilbury (see note 4)
3. Other Catholic girls. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after girls. (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 5 & 6)
6. Girls of other Christian denominations (see note 7)
7. Girls of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion or other religious leader (see note 8)
8. Any other girls.

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 10)
- (ii) The attendance of a 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

Priority will be given to girls living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance in each category. Distances are calculated [on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the front door of the child's home address (including the community entrance to flats) and the main entrance of the school. 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 school. 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 school in the normal admission round, you **must** complete a Common Application Form available from Thurrock Local Authority <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/secondary-school-admissions/applying-for-secondary-school-place>

You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 5 or 6. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to **Admissions, Grays Convent High School, College Avenue, Grays RM17 5UX** by **31st OCTOBER 2024**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application on 1st 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 will not be placed in criteria 1 to 3 or 5 or 6, and this is likely to 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 31st October 2024.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with Thurrock 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 girl is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to Admissions, Grays Convent High School, College Avenue, Grays RM17 5UX at the same time as the admission application is made. The Governing Body 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 Governing Body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals, as appropriate.

If your child was daughter between 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and you would like them to start Year 10 in a University Technical College (UTC) or a Studio School in September 2025, you must apply before 31 October 2024. You must complete an application even if you are applying for a place outside Thurrock. <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/secondary-school-admissions/year-10-admissions>

Waiting Lists

In addition to your 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, **2026**.

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. Application should be made to Thurrock Council, Admissions, <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/in-year-admissions/applying-in-year>

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 within 10 days (and a maximum of 15 days) (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 the Thurrock Fair Access agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the Governing Body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under the Thurrock agreed protocol. The Governing Body has this power even where admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

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

Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants have a statutory right of appeal to an Independent Statutory Appeals Panel.

Notes (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

1. A Statement of Special Education Needs is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child. 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 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 Governing Body 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 who is part of a Catholic family where a letter from a priest demonstrates that the child would have been baptised or received if it were not for their status as a looked after child (e.g. a looked after child in the process of adoption by a Catholic family).

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. For the purposes of this admission policy, attendance at a feeder primary school includes those who were prevented from attending a feeder school due to oversubscription of Catholics and whose application to attend was unsuccessful, normally evidenced by a letter of rejection from the feeder primary school.
5. '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.
6. 'Eastern Christian Church' includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

- 6 (1) "Girls 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.

- 6 (2) 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 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.
8. “Girls 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.
9. ‘Sister’ includes:
- (i) all natural sisters, or half sisters, adopted sisters, sisters, foster sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
 - (ii) the daughter 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 address as the applicant.
10. 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. (on the SIF).

11. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the Governing Body will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.
12. 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 Supplementary Information Form ("SIF"). 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 SIF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week. (on the SIF).

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, we will allocate a place in advance of your family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

Please read this in conjunction with the SIF which must be submitted by the date given in Applications and Procedures and Timetables.