

Our Ref: JAH/MM

1st October 2021

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Restoring counting attendance at public worship for admissions for September 2023

Context

The Admissions Policies for The Blue Coat School and The Brian Clarke CE Academy allocate a number of places to children from committed and practising Christian families. Christian commitment and practice are evidenced by attendance at public worship. If there are more applicants than places, the places available are given to those who have shown most commitment, through their attendance at public worship, over the previous 5 years up to the year of application. There is a cap of 39 on the number of points any child or parent/legal guardian can achieve in any normal (i.e. uninterrupted) year.

Impact of COVID-19

From 23 March 2020, Churches were closed as part of the national lockdown. From September 2020 some churches were able to open partially but many were not able to hold public worship at all. From 18 March 2020 attendance at worship has not been counted for admissions.

Restoration of recording and counting of attendance

National regulations changed in the summer of 2021 as the vaccine programme was rolled out. By September 2021 many churches were open again for public worship, some unrestricted. This process is now gathering pace. Following discussion with the Diocesan Board of Education and the Area Dean, the Trust Board's Admissions Committee has decided that we can reinstate **counting of attendance at worship from 31st October 2021**.

Which admissions years will this affect?

This will not affect children applying for a Year 7 place in September 2022. Their application will be based on the attendance of the child and one parent/legal guardian, as follows:

| | | |
|--|---------|---|
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2016-17 | Maximum of 39 attendances counted |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2017-18 | Maximum of 39 attendances counted |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2018-19 | Maximum of 39 attendances counted |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2019-20 | Maximum of 20 attendances counted up to 23 rd March 2020 |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2020-21 | No attendance counted |

It **will** affect pupils applying for a place in **2023**. Their record of attendance will include:

| | | |
|--|---------|---|
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2017-18 | Maximum of 39 attendances counted |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2018-19 | Maximum of 39 attendances counted |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2019-20 | Maximum of 20 attendances counted up to 23 rd March 2020 |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2020-21 | No attendance counted |
| 1 st September to 31 st August | 2021-22 | Maximum of 33 attendances counted from 31 st October 2021* |

*** Rationale:**

For the purposes of the policy, maximum attendance is based on 75% of the year. There are 44 weeks from 31st October 2021 to 31st August 2022, therefore maximum attendance is set at 33 weeks.

It will then affect pupils applying for 2024 and so on. While ever one of the 5 qualifying years has been affected by national restrictions, the maximum attendances above will apply.

[What if my Church has to close temporarily or restrict the numbers who can attend worship?](#)

We are asking clergy to record this as part of the Supplementary Information Form. It covers those occasions when a child and parent/legal guardian cannot attend public worship despite their best efforts because of restrictions caused by COVID.


[What if I or my child cannot attend for long periods because we are advised on health grounds not to do so?](#)

Both school policies contain a section on Exceptional Circumstances which apply to individuals. Applications for places based on Exceptional Circumstances are evaluated by the Admissions Authority on the basis of consistent criteria which are set out in the policy for each school.

[Will this need to go to consultation?](#)

We will be consulting on how both schools will ensure that families affected by temporary restrictions to public worship after 31st October 2021, or by serious COVID-related health risks, in the consultation round commencing in October 2021. This notification is to advise families in advance of the impending adjustment.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs J.A. Hollis
Chief Executive Officer
The Cranmer Education Trust