

The Diocese of Truro Admissions Guidance for Church Schools and Academies

Agreed in September 2016 and updated September 2017

“Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.”
Matthew 18: 2-5

It is the Diocese of Truro Board of Education’s recommendation that Church of England Schools in the Diocese should not include faith commitment as one of their over-subscription criteria because a church school education should be there for those who need it most. The majority of schools were originally set up for the ‘education of the poor.’ If we believe in justice and equality we must not set exclusive criteria but build communities in the love of Christ.

The National Society has withdrawn its guidance about defining attendance at church as ‘known to, at the heart of etc’ and also its more recent 2011 guidance. Church Schools should be guided instead by their Diocesan policy.

Some schools believe that their trust deed means that they were set up to provide education for Christian families but those that we have been able to check tend say something along the lines of ‘education for poor persons in the principles of the Christian religion according to the doctrines of the Church of England.’

Our Vision

The Church of England’s Vision for Education is for an education that enables children and young people to live life in all its fullness.

Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills
Educating for Hope and Aspiration
Educating for Community and Living Well Together
Educating for Dignity and Respect

‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.’
John 10.10

Determining Admission Policies and setting over-subscription criteria:

The Diocesan Board of Education **must be** consulted in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2014 and schools **must have regard to its advice**. We encourage governing boards and trust boards to look beyond the administration of places to how best the school can serve the local community in God's name. How does the school's admissions policy accord with its vision and the Church's vision for education?

We look forward to receiving your draft policies for consultation accompanied by the minutes of your discussion which will help inform future policy. If your trust deed is informing your policy please send us a copy of the relevant part.

If a governing board decides that it is central to its vision to have faith commitment as part of its over-subscription criteria:

- 1) The only definition used should be *attendance* at a Christian Church of any denomination.
- 2) The definition of 'regular attendance' should be up to the Priest/Minister to decide based on their knowledge of the family and the context of their church.
- 3) Schools may wish to provide a simple form for Priests to sign (a supplementary information form) or accept a letter.

'True hospitality....makes welcome and relationship possible across boundaries of faith or race or background....that welcome is the authentically Christian way of life and we see it in our schools every single day...It means engaging meaningfully and explicitly with difference....it needs to stem from a belief that God is at work in all people.'

Archbishop Justin Welby