

Saint Ambrose College

State-funded Independent Catholic Grammar School

Principal: Mr D. Rainey B.Ed (Hons)



ADMISSIONS POLICY SEPTEMBER 2026 ENTRY

Policy and Numbers

Saint Ambrose College is a state funded Independent Catholic Grammar School for boys aged 11 – 18. 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 these admission arrangements.

The normal admission years are for pupils aged 11 and 16. The number of intended admissions for the year commencing 1st September 2026 for Year 7 will be **140** and for external applicants at Year 12 is **10**. A copy of the School prospectus is available to download from the School website or available in hard copy on request.

Definitions

- “looked after children” and all previously looked after children. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority, in the exercise of their social services functions (as defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Previously looked after children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order (as defined in Section 14A of the Children Act 1989). This also includes children who have been in a state of care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in a state of care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.
- “the School” means Saint Ambrose College.
- “brother” means any boy (full, half, step, adopted or foster brother) of admissions age who is residing permanently at the same address as the candidate and will be in attendance at Saint Ambrose College at the time of the proposed admissions.
- “Entrance Exam” means the entrance examination taken by boys in Year 6 for entry into Year 7.
- “Pupil Premium” For the purposes of this Policy, Pupil Premium refers to Pupil Premium and Service Premium. The pupil premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the attainment of disadvantaged children. The Service Premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the pastoral needs of the children of Armed Services Personnel.
- “Catholic boy” means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. 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. All Catholic boys will be required to produce a copy of their Baptism Certificate or Certificate of Reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church when they complete the registration form to sit the entrance examination. **The Certificate must be dated prior to the date of application.** Any Baptism Certificate dated after the deadline for applications will not be considered prior to 1 March 2026 but may be considered following 1 March 2026.

Hale Barns, Altrincham, WA15 0HE.

t: 0161 980 2711 f: 0161 980 2323 e: office@st-ambrosecollege.org.uk www.st-ambrosecollege.org.uk

Saint Ambrose College Edmund Rice Academy Trust, Company incorporated in England & Wales.

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- ‘Catechumen’ means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. This should be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the Order of Catechumens.
- ‘Eastern Christian Church’ includes Orthodox Churches, and should be evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR YEAR 7

The Governors of the School will implement the Admissions Policy with regards to pupils wishing to join the School in Year 7 in September 2026.

Parents of children wishing to apply for a place at Saint Ambrose College must register a request directly with Saint Ambrose College for their son to sit the Entrance Exam by completing the online application on the website. The online application will be available from mid-April. Applications received after the deadline will only be considered following 1st March 2026.

The applicant’s date of birth must be between **1 September 2014** and **31 August 2015**.

Parents/carers seeking entry for their child into the school in Year 7 in September 2026 must include Saint Ambrose College in the ranked order of preference on their Home Local Authority’s Common Application Form (“CAF”). The closing date for the submission of the CAF to Home Local Authorities is 31 October 2025. In accordance with the Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements, all parents/carers will be notified of the outcome of their application by their Home Local Authority on or around 1 March 2026 (National Offer Day).

The Entrance Exam

The Entrance Exam will consist of three elements: Verbal Reasoning, Mathematics and English. These tests will be marked and age standardised. A successful outcome will be achieved by those applicants who score 320 or above in the entrance exam “the qualifying score”.

If your child is ill on the day of the exam, please do not bring him. You must obtain a doctor’s note and send this to the Admissions Officer at the School within one week of the exam. If your child sits the test despite being unwell, no allowance can be made to the test score achieved to consider the effect of any illness.

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Access Arrangements

Access arrangements will be agreed before the entrance test. They allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the test and show what they can do without changing the demands of the test. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual applicant without affecting the integrity of the exam. Access arrangements are the principle way in which the School complies with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The Equality Act 2010 requires the School to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, which will include, but are not limited to:

- The needs of the disabled applicant,
- The effectiveness of the adjustment,
- The cost of the adjustment; and
- The likely impact of the adjustment upon the applicant and the other applicants.

The evidence of need required by the School will vary depending on the disability and the access arrangement(s) being applied for. There are no set adjustments for a certain condition - each case is different and is assessed on an individual basis. Each request is assessed by the College SENDCo whose role is to ensure your child is not placed at a disadvantage due to a disability.

Equally the SENDCo must be mindful not to place a child at an unfair *advantage* over other candidates by granting adjustments that are not required or relevant. The SENDCo will make a decision with the format of this specific test in mind. For example, a child may have additional time and/or a scribe in written tests at school due to a difficulty with extended periods of writing. This does not mean that the child will receive the same adjustment in this entrance test. As a multiple-choice test there is no writing involved so in this example the SENDCo would likely refuse a request for additional time/scribe.

Where a request for 25% additional time is made, therefore, it will only be granted where there is evidence of substantial impairment or exceptional circumstances. In order to evidence such circumstances, parents should provide the School with an Education, Health and Care Plan or relevant official SEND Assessment Report detailing educational needs and adjustments that are required. All documentation must be on an official letterhead and show the Assessors full name, qualifications and demonstrate how the assessment results were reached. In addition, an Access Arrangements Request Form should be completed by the applicant's primary school to confirm the applicant's normal way of working. The primary school may be consulted.

All paperwork/requests for Access Arrangements must be received by the closing date for applications.

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Oversubscription Criteria

If the number of applicants achieving the required standard for entry exceeds the Published Admissions Number, then the following over-subscription criteria will apply in the following order to decide which pupils to admit.

1. Baptised Catholic boys who are designated 'looked after children' or 'previously looked after children'.
2. Baptised Catholic boys who have a brother attending the school at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic Boys whose home address¹ postcode falls within a nominated Local Pastoral Area. Details are provided in the list of Nominated Local Pastoral Areas.
4. Other Baptised Catholic boys.
5. Other Boys who are designated 'looked after children' or 'previously looked after children'.
6. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
7. Baptised Christian boys who have a brother attending the school.
8. Christian boys practising in other Christian denominations supported by a minister's reference confirming that they are a full and active member of the Church².
9. Other boys

In the event of over-subscription within any one of the categories, priority will be given to those boys who are in receipt of Pupil Premium followed by boys who achieved the highest marks in the Entrance Examination. Where more than one boy has the same score in any category then priority will be given to the boy living the closest distance from the boy's home address to St Ambrose College. The distance from home to St Ambrose College will be calculated in a direct straight line from the child's permanent place of residence using co-ordinates held in Trafford's Local Land and Property Gazetteer (BS7666) and are available, on request, from Trafford's School Admissions Team. In cases where this data is not available, Royal Mail postal address Information may be used. In the case of a child living in a block of flats the coordinates for all flats in that block will be the same. If distance is tied selection would take place by a random draw witnessed by all concerned parties.

For applicants who move address to within the nominated pastoral area following application, and who submit an on-time application to their home local authority including St Ambrose College as a preference, the new address will not be considered prior to 1 March 2026 but may be considered following 1 March 2026.

¹ "Home address" means the address where the child normally and permanently lives on a full-time basis, not the address of any child-minder, grandparent or any other relative. In the case of parents who are separated, the application will also be considered from the address where the child lives, even though the child may regularly spend some time at another address. Where it is claimed that the child's residency is shared equally between two addresses parents may decide which address will be used for the purpose of the application.

² "Full and active" means a regular churchgoer who attends more than once a month, is known to the parish priest / minister and is involved in church activities.

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Nominated Local Pastoral Areas

1 Saint Ambrose Deanery (Diocese of Shrewsbury)

The following Local Pastoral Areas include the following postcodes: All WA14, WA15, M31 and M33 postcodes.

St. Hugh and St John	West Timperley
St. Vincent de Paul's	Altrincham
All Saints	Ashton-on-Mersey
St. Margaret Ward	Sale
St. Joseph's	Sale
Holy Angels	Hale Barns
Our Lady of Lourdes	Partington
Holy Family	Sale Moor

2. Saint Ambrose Barlow Deanery (Diocese of Salford)

The following Local Pastoral Areas include the following postcodes: All M16, M21, M32 and M41 postcodes.

Our Lady's & St. Alphonsus	Moss Side/Old Trafford
St. Ann's & St. Hugh of Lincoln	Stretford
Our Lady and the English Martyrs'	Davyhulme/Urmston
St. Monica's	Flixton
St. John's and St Teresa's	Firswood / Chorlton

Waiting List

A waiting list for Year 7 admissions will be maintained until the end of the Autumn term of Year 7 for those boys who have qualified through the entrance examination but have not been allocated a place initially due to over-subscription. The placing of a boy's name on the waiting list does not remove the right of appeal.

Admission outside normal age Group

Consideration will be given to applications for admission outside of a boy's normal age group on an individual basis. This will take into account the child's academic, social and emotional development and factors outlined in Section 2.17 of the Schools Admissions Code (2014). Younger applicants may be considered for entry providing they are currently in a class one year ahead of their correct cohort and they achieve the qualifying score in the Entrance Examination. Older applicants may be considered for entry providing they are currently in a class one year behind their current cohort. Where a child sits an assessment outside of their normal age group they will not be allowed to sit a further assessment with their normal age group.

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IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS FOR YEARS 7 - 11

Full details of how in year applications are dealt with and the online Application Form can be found on the School website at: <https://www.st-ambrosecollege.org.uk/page/?title=In+Year+Admissions&pid=43>.

All in year applications will be acknowledged no later than 15 school days from receipt.

Only one in-year assessment process can be undertaken each academic year. Reassessment of a candidate following an unsuccessful 'In-Year' assessment test may only take place a minimum of 12 months after the original assessment.

In-year transfers may cause considerable disruption to your son's academic progress especially once option choices have been made.

ADMISSION TO SAINT AMBROSE COLLEGE SIXTH FORM 2026

A copy of the Sixth Form Information Booklet will be available to download from the School website or available in hard copy on request.

An Open Evening will be held in November of the determination year, the year immediately before the offer year, details of which and further admissions information will be on the School website.

All applicants (both internal and external) will be asked to complete an online Application Form listing in order of preference the subjects they wish to study at A Level. Applicants will be required to undertake either 3 A Levels and a supplementary subject (EPQ or Core Maths) or 4 A Levels (subject to achieving the minimum criteria). All subjects will need to be studied for the full 2-year course. The closing date for applications will be clearly stated on the application form. Applications after this time will only be considered after GCSE results day in August.

Sixth Form Admission Criteria

Applicants who wish to study 3 A levels and a supplementary subject will require a minimum Attainment 8 Score³ of **60pts** to include at least a Grade 5 in Mathematics and English Language. A minimum of a Grade 6 is required in the subject to be studied at A level with the exception of Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry or Physics where a minimum of a Grade 7, or a Grade 7/7 in combined science, is required. Applicants who wish to study Psychology must have a minimum of Grade 7 in either Biology, Chemistry or Physics, or a Grade 7/7 in combined science. Applicants who wish to study Business or Economics, but have not had the opportunity to take a GCSE in that subject, must have at least a Grade 6 in Mathematics. Similarly, any applicant who wishes to study Government and Politics must have at least a Grade 6 in English Language. Applicants who wish to study Computer Science must have also achieved a minimum Grade 7 in Mathematics.

³ Details of how to calculate an Attainment 8 score can be found at: <https://www.st-ambrosecollege.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=380&type=pdf>.

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Applicants who wish to study 4 A levels will require a minimum Attainment 8 Score of **75pts** to include at least a Grade 6 in Mathematics and English Language. A minimum of a Grade 6 is required in the subject to be studied at A level with the exception of Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry or Physics where a minimum of a Grade 7, or a Grade 7/7 in combined science is required. Applicants who wish to study Psychology must have a minimum of Grade 7 in either Biology, Chemistry or Physics, or a Grade 7/7 in combined science. Applicants who wish to study Business or Economics, but have not had the opportunity to take a GCSE in that subject, must have at least a Grade 6 in Mathematics. Similarly, any applicant who wishes to study Government and Politics must have at least a Grade 6 in English Language. Applicants who wish to study Computer Science must have also achieved a minimum Grade 7 in Mathematics.

Applicants are requested to look carefully at the Sixth Form Admissions webpage for details of the relevant GCSE subjects required for each A Level.

Please note, that attaining the entry level grades will mean that the applicant is eligible for sixth form study at the College. Where a place is offered, it does not guarantee the applicant a particular course of study. The College will endeavour to enable successful students to study their preferred choices but circumstances may mean this is not always possible.

Applicants from the School

Eligible applicants from the School will be offered a Sixth Form place if they meet the entry criteria on GCSE Results Day.

External Applicants

After all applicants from Saint Ambrose College who have qualified for entry into the Sixth Form have been accommodated, any available places will be offered to students from other schools who have achieved the Sixth Form admissions criteria. If there are more successful applicants than places available then we will apply the Oversubscription Criteria.

Oversubscription Criteria

The criteria for over-subscription will be as for Year 7 and will only apply to external candidates. In the event of over-subscription within any one of the categories, priority will be given to those boys who are in receipt of Pupil Premium followed by those boys with the highest Attainment 8 score. Where more than one boy has the same score then priority in any category will be given to boy living the closest distance from home to Saint Ambrose College. If distance is tied selection would take place by a random draw witnessed by all concerned parties.

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APPEAL PROCESS

Parents of boys who are not successful in the offer of places for Year 7 following the Entrance Examination have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.

Parents of boys who wish to enter the school after Year 7 may be informed that the School has no places. Parents have the right to appeal against this decision to an Independent Appeals Panel.

Where a boy is not successful in the offer of a place in Sixth Form following GCSE Results Day, both the student and the parents have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. Where they appeal separately the appeal must be heard together. Please note, that a successful 6th Form appeal will mean that the applicant is eligible for sixth form study at the College. However, the grade criteria for studying a particular A Level course will still be applicable and all courses are offered subject to resource availability.

The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final and binding on all parties. Being granted an appeal hearing is no guarantee of a place being offered.

If you wish to exercise your right to appeal, please contact the Admissions Officer at the school directly.

Appeals within the normal admission round will be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals. An appeals timetable will be available on the School website by 28th February each year.

'In Year' admission appeals will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.

Appellants considering making a complaint regarding an appeal may contact the Department for Education at: [School admissions: Complain about the appeals process - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/school-admissions).

Any person or body who considers that these arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the School Admissions Code or relevant law relating to admissions, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator.

Website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator

Email: osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 01325 340 402

Office of the Schools Adjudicator

Bishopsgate House

Feethams

Darlington DL1 5QE

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