

Bethany School Admissions Procedure

(January 2017)

Bethany School has an **open** admissions policy which means that we do not select our pupils with reference to faith, ability, aptitude or on the ability of the family to fully fund a place at Bethany School. This policy is designed to help discern the best way forward for your family as you consider applying for a place at Bethany School. It describes the admissions procedure which includes

1. First Contact
2. Information Pack
3. Visit to School
4. Complete Application Form
5. Admissions visit to family
6. Approval at Governors' meeting
7. Offer/Acceptance of place.

First Contact

Usually people first hear about the school or get information about the school in one of the following ways:

- Word of mouth
- Publicity
- League tables
- Web-site/Social Media
- Christian Schools' Trust
- Telephone call requesting information pack

If people contact the school, some information regarding the nature of the enquiry (e.g. year group required, availability of places, reasons for enquiry) can be given/obtained but this information will not prejudice the application.

Information Pack

This is a document, which gives general information about the school. A brief outline is given about the areas listed below:

- When did it all start?
- How is the school managed?
- What is Christian education?
- The Aims and Purposes of Bethany School.
- Curriculum Model
- School Organisation
- Daily Routine
- Staffing and Parental Involvement
- Admission Procedure
- The Financial Commitment
- The Future
- Further Information

The Information Pack can be found on the school website, sent to the applicant by post, or given to families at their first visit. The next step involves the family requesting a visit to the school. An appointment is made with the Head Teacher (or Deputy Head teacher). It is helpful for **both** parents (and/or guardian/s) to see the

school, as, if an application is made, an Admission visit will not usually take place until this has happened.

Visit to School

The visit is usually conducted by the Head Teacher (or Deputy Head teacher) and involves a tour of the building. The purpose of the school visit is to highlight the strengths of the school, expand on material contained in the Information Pack and to inform regarding the distinctive features of Bethany School. In each part of the tour different elements of work in the school are explained. The notes below indicate what is likely to be mentioned in each area:

- Language Room – which languages taken and from what age, part-time/volunteer teachers
- Junior Classroom – class size, Topic Themes, no National Curriculum (SATs), recorders, music lessons.
- Parent / Teacher room – parental involvement, Christian Curriculum information, CFS Ltd
- Link corridor – Family Afternoon, Camp
- D+T/Art Room (Studio) – Specialist subjects including some limitations re: Facilities, Grants, standards of work achieved, GCSE and throughout the school
- Senior Class – Topic Theme, class size, teaching groups
- Science Room – GCSE subjects / results, National Curriculum/Key Stage 4, facilities, parental involvement
- Yards – break-time routines, God's provision
- GCSE block – small teaching rooms, GCSE admin, computer room, Christian Union, extra English including limitations of Special Educational Needs provision
- Reception / Y1 Classroom – older / younger / care for / respect, admission times, parental involvement, benefits of early entry, class size / school size / starting other Christian Schools, investment in early years (staffing /facilities)
- Infant Classroom – Class size, Topic Theme, Special Educational Needs teaching,
- Hall – morning prayers, parents meetings, PE (including use of Ponderosa etc.), extra-curricular clubs, Family Afternoon, ethos and Christian Education in general. A discussion regarding "Behaviour and Discipline", "Organisation of the School Day" and "Encouraging Commitment" documents. Answering any questions.

It should be made clear that we offer places to **whole families** and if an application is made then any siblings should be included in the application. There may be special circumstances which would prevent this (e.g. older children or special educational needs) and such information should be exchanged.

Further information may be gained about the nature of the enquiry but this should not prevent an application for a place being made. However, if there are potential issues, it may be necessary to comment on the likelihood of a place being offered. It is explained that we try to provide as much information as possible so that parents can feel fully informed before making the decision to apply for a place. Similarly, we hope that parents will be open with us about their reasons for looking at Bethany School.

At the end of the visit, the family is encouraged to study the following document, which contains information about the areas listed below:

Encouraging Commitment Document

- Commitment to our children
- Commitment to Bethany School
- Commitment to a Vision for Christian Education
- Opportunities for Commitment
- Specimen Annual Commitments Form (*position of Statement of Faith)

Parents are also referred to the Bethany School Website www.bethanyschoolsheffield.org for further information, (for example to see the full “Admissions Procedure”, or “Organisation of the School Day” document).

Application Form (See Appendix 1)

Parents are encouraged to contact the school for clarification or further explanation of issues arising from this visit before an application form is filled in. If only one parent has visited the school it must be made clear that the application will not usually proceed until both parents (guardian/s) have seen the school.

When an application form is received, a photocopy is filed in date order and the form is passed on to the Admissions Secretary. The family is contacted, and a Governor is arranged to attend the Admission visit. The parents will be visited at home by one Governor **and** the Admissions Secretary or two Governors, or may be seen at school.

Admission Visit to Family (See Appendix 2)

The purpose of the Admission visit is to give further, more detailed information about aspects of the school and to obtain information, which will enable the offer of a place to be made. At this stage we are still trying to encourage families to join the school. We have an ‘Open Admissions Policy’ which means we do not select our pupils with reference to faith, ability, aptitude or on the ability of the family to fully fund a place at Bethany School. It may be that during the exchange of information problems may arise and the family will withdraw or defer their application for a place in Bethany School. It may become clear that it is not possible for the school to supply appropriate provision for the child or that the parents are unable to fully commit themselves to the support of and involvement with aims, nature and style of the school. It should be made clear that an offer may not be made (even if a place is available) if the balance of the class would be significantly disrupted by the introduction of an additional pupil.

Information Parents should obtain from Governors:

- A brief history of the school
- Some detail about how the school is financed. Explain the ‘sacrificial’ nature of commitment to the school
- Our expectations regarding parental commitment to the school
- What the school cannot offer e.g. not all staff are trained teachers, limited expertise in special needs, limited facilities at secondary level
- Special events – Family Afternoons, Camp, Open Mornings, Book Day

Information Governors should obtain from parents:

- Ask if there are any questions raised or problems posed by the documents given out at the school visit, e.g. travelling, Family Afternoon, Duties, Camp, School Norms, Meetings, Christian Education and supporting our ethos.
- Reason for application – expand on information given on application form
- Any known or suspected behavioural problem, health needs or special educational needs -any difficulties noted.
- For younger children: use of toilet, coping with packed lunch, dressing themselves, ability to sit and listen, ability to obey simple instructions
- Christian testimony, church background, and financial situation may be discussed however as we do not select pupils based on these issues, information gathered will not prejudice the application.

Information received from applicants will be reported back to the Governors' Meeting. (See attached Admission Visit report document) Also, class teachers will be given relevant information.

If it seems that there are no difficulties then the Governor/Admissions Secretary may indicate that an offer of a place is likely, subject to agreement at the next Governors' Meeting.

If problems are encountered then the family should know that these will be discussed with Governors and the teachers and this might result in the class teacher wanting to speak to the family. If necessary the class teacher will contact the family and the child's previous school, gather more detailed information and prepare a report for the Governors.

This information would include:

- Behaviour
- Physical problems
- Academic Levels
- How any problems that child has may affect the class
- A view regarding our ability to offer what the child needs

The Offer

If appropriate, the Governors will make an offer of a place including a starting date. The Admissions Secretary will inform the family and class teacher of the offer. The family should return the acceptance included in their formal place offer letter. The teacher's representative will report back to the next staff meeting any admissions decisions made at the Governors' Meeting.

The class teacher may need to contact the family giving information relating to materials, equipment and routines.

The Admissions Secretary will provide a Welcome Pack for the family and will maintain annual contact if the offer is for a child below school age. The family will be invited to school events via the mailing list and asked to inform the School of any change in circumstances.

The Welcome Pack may include:

- Commitments Form
- Family Afternoon Programme

- Topic Information
- Friends Of Bethany School Application Form
- Family Afternoon programme
- Camp Brochure
- Pupil Personal Details Form
- Year Planner
- Behaviour and Discipline Document
- Organisation of the School Day Document

Admission Dates

Reception Class - September of the school year in which the child becomes 5. Parents or the school may feel that a part time or staged entry may be more appropriate. Parents should discuss this with the Reception Class teacher. Admission to all other classes would usually be at the start of each term, but can be negotiated.

Place Availability

- Bethany School has 8 places available in each year.
- Each year, in the 'Unborn/Just born' cohort two places are reserved (until February of each school year) for siblings of existing Bethany School families.
- The places in each pre-school year are offered on a 'first-come, first served' basis.
- When the 8th place has been allocated additional places will be offered on a waiting list.
- School age children can be offered places subject to availability.
- Wherever possible, we will accommodate, and give priority to, siblings of existing Bethany School families, 'elasticating' class sizes if necessary.

Removing a pupil from Bethany School

We hope that pupils starting Bethany School will remain with us until the end of year 11 (GCSE's) however we understand that from time to time families make the decision to leave Bethany School and that this can be entirely appropriate for that family. We will be supportive of families who have thoughtfully come to this position.

It would be helpful if families are considering leaving Bethany School to:

- Involve the school early in the decision making process by consulting with the class teacher, head teacher or your Governor. Bethany School would hope to be able to resolve any problems at this stage,
- Let us know first, if you make the decision to begin to look for another school - and discuss your reasons.
- Fulfil your financial commitment to Bethany School for the remainder of the academic year.
- Consider becoming a Friend of Bethany School.

When a final decision has been made we will work hard to make the transition a smooth, pleasant and positive experience for the family and Bethany School.

It may be appropriate for the Governors to withdraw the offer of a family's place at Bethany School. This would necessitate finding a new school /s for their child / children.

Appendix 1
CHRISTIAN FAMILY SCHOOLS LTD
APPLICATION TO ENROL A CHILD IN BETHANY SCHOOL

Child's Details

First Name(s): Surname:
Date of Birth: Age:years.....months
Current School Year (if applicable): Start date requested:

Child's Previous School(s)

Please give names of any school(s) and dates attended (if applicable):
.....
.....

Further relevant information about the child

Please include any information regarding disabilities, learning difficulties, behavioural problems, allergies, etc.
.....
.....

Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

Surname:
First Name:
Address:
.....
Contact telephone number(s):
Email:

Church/Fellowship Attended (if applicable)

Name:
Pastor/Leader: Contact telephone number:

Please read the statements overleaf about the school's aims and its Christian beliefs. Think about these statements carefully and answer the following questions honestly:

I/We agree with the school's aims as set out overleaf: YES NO
I/We agree with the school's statement of faith as set out overleaf: YES NO
Please explain in your own words your reasons for wanting to become part of Bethany School:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Does this child have brothers/sisters aged under 16 years? YES NO
Are you applying for them to be pupils at Bethany? YES NO
If NO, please give reasons:

.....
.....

Please state how you heard about Bethany School:

.....

In signing this application, I/we:

- wish my/our child to be a pupil at Bethany School
- state that the information given above is correct, complete and accurate • promise to support fully the aims of Bethany School as set out below
- wish to become a member of Christian Family Schools Ltd, a company limited by guarantee

Signed (parent/guardian)	Signed (parent/guardian)
Date:	Date:

Please return the completed application form to the Head teacher at Bethany School. When she has received the form, we will make arrangements for two Governors to visit and talk with you about the commitments that Bethany involves for parents. Each new family, and annually each current family involved in the school, is asked to sign the commitment form to support the school in both financial and practical matters. The Governing Council will consider your application at the earliest opportunity after you have returned this form. Admission is at the sole discretion of the Governing Council.

AIMS OF BETHANY SCHOOL

AS SET OUT IN THE MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN FAMILY SCHOOLS LTD

To provide a school or schools staffed with committed Christians using a distinctly Biblical approach to knowledge and learning. Parents will be expected to be committed to active participation in the education of their children both at home and at school. The aim being to equip each child with Biblical understanding which will equip that child for practical living in this world and to encourage the child's awareness of spiritual and eternal realities. The parents will be expected to fully support these aims though their own religious or world views may differ.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

AS SET OUT IN THE MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN FAMILY SCHOOLS LTD

The doctrinal basis of faith of the Company shall be the fundamental truths of Christianity including:

- the divine inspiration, inerrancy and infallibility of Holy Scriptures as contained in the sixty six books of the Old and New Testaments and as originally given, and in its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct;
- the unity of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead, and the sovereignty of God in creation, providence and redemption;
- the creation of man in the image of God and the universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the Fall, rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation;
- the Lord Jesus Christ as true God and true man, His deity, incarnation, virgin birth, sinless life, atoning death, and physical resurrection, and the only true head of the universal church of all believers;
- redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the shed blood and sacrificial death (as our representative and substitute) of Jesus Christ;
- the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to make the death of Christ effective to the individual sinner, granting him repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ, and the indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit in all believers;
- the expectation of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Appendix 2
ADMISSION VISIT AND REPORT

Application from: _____

Name of child (ren): _____

Information already given to applicant(s):	Information Pack	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Encouraging Commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>

Visited website for further information: ☐

School Tour Yes ☐ No ☐

Reason for application: _____

Appointment date and time:

Present at visit: _____

1. History and Purpose of the School (IP) plus future plans ☐

2. Time Commitments

Family Afternoon (every Wednesday) ☐

New Parents' Training (2 Mondays Sept/Oct) ☐

Parents Meeting (every half term) ☐

Parents Meeting (every half term) ☐

Christmas at Bethany (December) and Summer Fayre (June) ☐

School Camp ☐

3. Financial Commitments

Regular Gifting ☐

Fundraising; Friends of Bethany etc ☐

4. School Day/Week; Jobs List and Work Night ☐

5. Curriculum, including GCSE subjects ☐

6. Child's special needs, problems (behavioural, educational, social)? ☐

7. Transition into school life ☐

PTO

REPORT

Discussed with class teacher(s) Yes ☐ No ☐

Discussed at Governors' Meeting on.....