

DEFINITIONS OF BAPTISED ROMAN CATHOLIC

Within the main body of the Briefing Notes I suggested that trying to include within Admissions Policies a definition of baptised Roman Catholic might well prove unwieldy.

However, and without treading too deep into Canon Law, it may be useful for Admissions Authorities in Roman Catholic schools to dwell a little more on who may be included within the definition and so afforded first criteria status.

In addition to candidates who can give evidence of baptism within the Roman Catholic Church, the definition of baptised Roman Catholic can be extended to children enrolled in or having completed the catechumenate (process of preparation to be received into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church) and those from Eastern Rite Churches in communion with Rome viz:

- ALEXANDRIAN : Coptic, Ethiopian (Eritrean Catholic Church)
- ANTIOCH: Malankrese (Sri Lanka), Maronite, Syrian
- ARMENIAN: Armenian
- CHALDEAN (East Syrian): Chaldean, Malabar
- CONSTANTINOPLE (BYZANTINE): Albanian, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Georgian, Greek, Melchite, Italo-Albanian, Romanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Slovakian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Macedonian and the Church of the Byzantines of the Diocese of Krizevci.

Though the above may explain a reluctance to include a full definition of Baptised Roman Catholic within the specimen admissions policies, hopefully the information will assist Admissions Authorities. Do bear in mind that the Orthodox Churches are not in communion with Rome and this includes the Russian and Greek Orthodox Churches. Where further guidance is needed in individual cases, then do not hesitate to contact the Diocese.

Governing Bodies are asked to note that:

On a number of occasions parents have sought admission to some Roman Catholic schools and supported their application with evidence that their child has received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist although their child was not a baptised Roman Catholic when admitted to the Sacraments.

Only children who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church or have been formally received into full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church can be admitted to the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist.

Governors are asked to ensure that parents or carers are made aware of this before their children are enrolled in the First Holy Communion Programme. Any parent or carer who requests that their non-Catholic child be enrolled in the First Holy Communion Programme should be referred to their local Parish Priest without delay.

We would recommend that schools confirm that they have the appropriate documentation (i.e. Catholic Baptismal Certificate or Certificate of Reception into full Communion) prior to enrolling a child in the First Sacraments Programme.

Once again, if further guidance is required in relation to individual cases, then do not hesitate to contact the Diocese.