



Supporting Statement on Admissions Consultation for St Thomas' CE VA, Heaton Chapel

St Thomas' CE Voluntary Aided Primary School was founded over 150 years ago as a Church of England School to serve the children of the Parish of St Thomas', Heaton Chapel.

Since then, and in recent years, school catchment areas (otherwise known as Governor Priority Areas) have been introduced and boundaries were drawn which excluded part of the Parish.

On very rare occasions, families have moved into the Parish and, being regular attenders at St Thomas' Church, have applied for places at the school. These have sometimes been turned down by the Local Authority who administer admissions on behalf of the Governing Board of the School. The admissions of these few pupils being unsupported by the current Oversubscription Criteria of the School's Admissions Policy.

The Governors of St. Thomas' have taken the view that this disadvantages children who are in the Parish and are regular attenders at church. It does not seem fair that a small number of local children of the Christian faith have a lower entitlement to a place at a Christian School. This is at odds with the School's original Foundation.

Oversubscription criteria three and four are aimed at correcting this unfairness and raising the profile of the Christian distinctiveness of the school which is set in statute, particularly as we are a Voluntary Aided School. **The listed oversubscription criteria are only used in the event of an appeal for a school place.**

The Governing Board are convinced that **this will not disadvantage** children from category six ("other children resident within the catchment of the school") who constitute the overwhelming majority of our pupils; as a school in expansion there is sufficient capacity for children of the catchment who request a place. It is certainly true that a sizeable minority come from districts of south Manchester; Heaton's children from the catchment would still have priority over those coming from outside of the Local Authority.

This proposal does not constitute a threat to places for children in the school catchment area; rather it seeks to address an unfairness for the small number of children attending church within the Parish.

St Thomas' remains an inclusive school aiming to welcome children of all faiths and none.

St Thomas' CE Primary School

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