



Becket Keys Church of England School

Consultation on Admissions Arrangements September 2025

Background

The Russell Education Trust, “RET” is the admissions authority for Becket Keys Church of England School “the school”. The Local Governing Body consider changes to the school’s admissions arrangements and consult on these. Following consultation, the Governors report to RET on the outcome of the consultation and make recommendations before RET determine the final admissions policies.

The admissions consultation for the 2025-26 Year 7 Admissions Policy¹ and Sixth Form Admissions Policy² ran from **Friday 15 December 2023 – Friday 26 January 2024**.

This consultation followed the procedure set by the Admissions Code 2021 and gave the local community the opportunity to provide their views on the proposed admission arrangements. Consultees were invited to send us their comments on the proposed policies. They were directed to the Consultation Document³ for further explanation of the proposed changes.

Proposal

Year 7 Admissions Policy - Faith Criterion

The intention of the school’s ‘faith criterion’ is to enable the children of families who are committed in faith and regularly attend a Christian Church, to gain a place at the school. To ascertain that this is the case for individual applications, it was proposed that the period of church attendance required to meet the ‘faith criterion’ be extended from **two to three years**. Regular attendance to be verified by clergy using the criteria set out on the Supplementary Information Form.

Sixth Form Admissions Policy - Faith Criterion

It was proposed that the ‘faith criterion’ for external applicants to the school’s Sixth Form be amended to mirror the proposed Year 7 policy (as set out above), i.e. it was proposed that the period of church attendance required to meet the ‘faith criterion’ be extended from **two to three years**.

Summary of responses:

The Local Governing Body received **87 responses** during the consultation period.

14 respondents were in favour of increasing the period of church attendance required to meet the ‘faith criterion’, from two to three years. The main reasons they supported the change were:

- It would benefit local Christian families who have been regular church attenders for many years.
- Those who have been attending Church for the minimum time to ‘tick a box’ would be required to show more commitment for a faith place.
- Families who had a committed Christian faith but did not attend one of the ‘named’ churches would have a fairer chance of admission to the school on a faith basis.

¹ [BKS Proposed Admissions Policy Year 7 2025.pdf \(becketkeys.org\)](#)

² [BKS Proposed Admissions Policy Sixth Form 2025.pdf \(becketkeys.org\)](#)

³ [BKS Admissions Consultation 2025.pdf \(becketkeys.org\)](#)

5 respondents supported the change in principle but felt that the lack of notice was unfair. They suggested that more notice needed to be given to affected families and that the change should not be implemented until 2026 at the earliest.

A further 68 responses raised concerns about the proposed amendment to the 'faith criterion'. A summary of the concerns raised included:

- Respondents objected to the change because it was moving the 'goalposts'. This was unfair because it would negatively impact certain groups of children, i.e. those in Years 4 and 5 and therefore, the likelihood of these children gaining a place. There is not now enough time for these families to meet the proposed period of church attendance before they need to apply.
- The proposed change was particularly unfair to the children in these Year Groups because they were also the Year Groups most negatively impacted by Covid.
- No adequate notice has been given to families affected by this change to allow them to comply.
- Some Christian families regularly attending worship before the two-year period, did not arrange to sign the church register for more than two years as this is not currently a requirement of the published admissions policy which they believed would apply.
- Additional attendance over and above fortnightly for two years is not currently considered under the faith criterion so there was no requirement to sign the church register or attend fortnightly any sooner than two years prior to application.
- Had families known in good time that a different period of attendance would be required, they would have arranged to ensure that their regularity of attendance was recorded prior to the two-year period commencing.
- Families impacted by the change had previously attended open events at the school and had been told that the period of required church attendance was two years and they relied on this.
- Some churches are in vacancy and so clergy could not be asked to verify attendance prior to the period of signing in. The SIF would have to be signed by the Church Warden or other senior church members, who might not be able to verify historic attendance, so some families would be penalised.
- Decision making about the period and regularity of attendance prior to the family signing the church records could become subjective, if families were required to prove more than two years attendance.
- Some of these respondents (33) suggested that if the school's decision was to go ahead with the change, there should be a transitional period for implementation to allow applicants to comply (e.g. by signing their church's attendance records in good time to meet the new requirement). Most thought the change should not take effect until at least September 2026 or 2027.

Outcome of consultation

At its meeting on 30 January 2024, the Local Governing Body considered the responses received to the consultation and recommended to the RET Board that there should be no change to the 'faith criterion' for September 2025 admissions. However, it was recommended that the change to the 'faith criterion' be implemented for September 2028 admissions (subject to future consultation) to allow time for applicants to comply.

Decision

Taking into account the recommendations of the Local Governing Body, the Admissions Arrangements for Year 7 and Sixth Form have been determined by delegated authority of the RET Board. The arrangements, including the Supplementary Information Form, have been published on the school's website and appropriate bodies have been notified. To ensure parents and carers are aware of the intention to increase the required period of church attendance from **two to three years** for September 2027 admissions, a notice has been included within the determined 2025 Admissions Arrangements as follows:

The school has publicly consulted on changes to the 'faith criterion'. For applications to Year 7 in September 2028, the school intends to amend the period of church attendance required to meet the 'faith criterion' to fortnightly attendance for at least three years.