



St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School

ADMISSION POLICY

September 2017

(amended December 2017)

1. General

St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School is a co-educational voluntary secondary school under Church of Ireland management. The Grammar School provides a six-year cycle of education, comprising three programmes: Junior Certificate, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate. Students are expected to participate in all three programmes and to attend all official school activities.

The Grammar School's Admission Policy, as required under Section 9 (m) and Section 15 (2) (d) of the Education Act 1998, is available from the School office and can be viewed on the Grammar School website. It has been approved by the Board of Management of St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School.

Applications for places at the start of first year should be made online through the Grammar School's website: www.stpatrickscgs.ie. Applications for places other than at the start of first year should be made on the official application form which is available to download from the School's website or from the School office. The Ethos and Mission Statement and the Code of Behaviour are also available in the 'Policies' Menu on the Grammar School's website.

Application forms must be fully completed. An application for any year cannot be considered until a completed application form has been received.

When accepting a place in the Grammar School, parents must sign an agreement to support and comply with the Grammar School Attendance Policy, Code of Behaviour, Uniform Policy and all other Policies of St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School.

2. Pre-existing policies

This policy supersedes all pre-existing admission policies. All applications for places in the school beginning in 2019 and onward will be processed according to this policy or to succeeding versions of this policy. This includes applications made prior to the effective date of this policy. Unlike previous

policies, this policy does not attach any significance to the date of application when allocating places.

3. Special Educational Needs

The Grammar School welcomes applications from pupils with a disability, or with special educational needs. Places will be offered based on the same criteria as for other pupils, provided that the Board of Management is satisfied that the Grammar School has suitable facilities, resources and capacity available to provide an education appropriate to the abilities and needs of the particular pupil.

Under the new allocation model (2017) students will be identified for additional teaching support in accordance with the Continuum of Support Guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills. Teachers and the School Principal will use their professional judgement in applying the principles and practices set out in the Continuum of Support Guidelines:

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-ServiceNEPS-/neps_special_needs_guidelines.pdf

Medical and other professional assessments should, where available, be submitted to the school to be used to help explain, and provide a better understanding of a student's needs, the nature of his/her difficulties, and to inform relevant interventions.

When making an application parents should also inform the school if their child has been in receipt of supplementary teaching from a resource or learning support teacher.

4. Application procedure for places at the start of first year

Applications will not be accepted before 1st January two years before the proposed year of entry to the school. Prior to this date parents/guardians may submit an online expression of interest in which case they will be notified by email as soon as the application process begins and will be invited to make a formal application. When the school receives a fully completed online application form, together with the applicant's birth certificate and, if appropriate, certificate of adoption, the applicant's name is placed on the list of candidates seeking places at the start of First Year in the year specified on the application form. The birth certificate (and certificate of adoption, if appropriate) are returned along with an acknowledgment of the receipt of the application form.

5. Admissions policy and procedure

Applications for admission to the school at the start of First Year close on 30th September two years before the proposed year of entry to the school. No further applications for places at the start of First Year are accepted after that date unless an older sibling has been offered and accepted a place at the school or if the Board considers that there are exceptional circumstances, for example, a

family returning from abroad. In such circumstances the decision to accept the application after the closing date will be entirely at the discretion of the board.

The number of places available at the start of First Year is up to 48. In the event that there are more than 48 applications, all applicants that have attended St. Patrick's Cathedral Choir School for not less than four years and have been full and active members of either the boys' or girls' Cathedral Choirs for the full duration of that time will be offered a place irrespective of any other criteria. All additional places will be offered according to a points system.

5.1. Points System

Points may be awarded to candidates in one or more of the following categories:

(a) Affiliation with Particular Religious Traditions

- Children who are members of, or have, through active participation, become accustomed members of the Church of Ireland.
- Children who are members of, or have, through active participation, become accustomed members of other Protestant churches or reformed traditions of Christianity that are members of the Irish Council of Churches.
- Children of inter-church families where at least one parent is a member of the Church of Ireland or where one parent is a member of another Protestant church or Reformed tradition of Christianity that are members of the Irish Council of Churches

Note: In order to confirm eligibility for priority points in any of the above categories, the school reserves the right to seek additional supporting information e.g. baptismal certificates and /or clerical letters of verification of attendance prior to the offering of places.

(b) Siblings

- Children who are brothers or sisters of pupils currently attending the school
- Children who are brothers or sisters of past pupils (or pupils that will have left the school by the time the applicant starts attending)

Note: The school-leaving year of the sibling or past-pupil may affect the number of points allocated.

(c) Parents and Guardians

- Children of a parent or a guardian who is a past pupil

(d) The Cathedral Community

- Children who are members of families who have a proved connection with or who have been of service to the Grammar School, Saint Patrick's Cathedral Choir school or Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

(e) Schools

- Children who have attended a school or schools under Protestant management taking account of the total number of years of attendance.

(f) Gender

The points system may be adjusted to ensure that no more than 60% of places are occupied by one gender. Nothing in the policy will prevent a student, once admitted, from identifying with a different gender.

(g) Proximity to the school

- Proximity to the school will be determined as being the shortest distance by road between the applicant's home address and the school.

5.2. List of Applicants

The Board of Management will publish details of the points system. The Board of management may, from time to time, amend the points system. Where a place cannot be allocated on the basis of a points differential, random selection will be used.

Notwithstanding the priority categories listed above, the board of management may, from time to time, add additional categories in order to preserve the characteristic spirit of the school. Details of any such additional categories will be published and made available upon request.

After the closing date for applications has passed all applicants will be ascribed the appropriate number of points. All applicants will then be placed on the List of Applicants according to the number of points they have been ascribed and, in descending order.

5.3. Music Scholarship

The board of management may, at its sole discretion, offer up to two places at the start of first year to any prospective student considered to be willing and able to make a significant contribution to the unique musical culture of the school through the playing of a musical instrument. Any such place will be offered solely on the basis of an independently assessed audition and the points system will not apply. Further details about the music scholarship are available by request from the school office.

5.4. Initial Offers

In the first week of October two years before the proposed year of entry the Principal will make initial offers of places in First Year. Places are offered to applicants on the list of applicants in the order in which they appear on that list. For the avoidance of doubt, places are first offered to applicants with the highest number of points and so on down through the list until all 48 places have been filled. If, at any stage in this process, the total number of remaining applicants with the same number of points exceeds the number of remaining places then the places will be offered following a process of random selection. When 48 offers of places in First Year have been accepted, waiting lists in each gender category will be created. Within each gender category the names of any applicants who did not receive an offer are placed on the Waiting List in the order in which they appeared on the initial list of applicants.

5.5. Unsuccessful applications

When the Waiting List has been created, the Principal writes to the parents/guardians of all applicants who are not receiving an offer of a place. The parents/guardians of each applicant whose name has been placed on the Waiting List are informed of the applicant's current place on that list. Parents/guardians should note that the applicant's place on the Waiting List could change by moving either up or down the list (see below for details about how siblings of applicants who receive a place other than at the start of First Year may affect the waiting list).

5.6. Responding to an offer

All offers will be accompanied with a specified Acceptance Date. In order to secure the place offered (subject to the school's right to refuse enrolment, referred to below) parents/guardians must ensure that the school is notified of acceptance of the offer on or before the Acceptance Date. If the school does not receive notification on or before the Acceptance Date the offer of a place is deemed to have been declined.

5.7. Declining a place

It is understood that parents/guardians may apply to more than one second-level school for a place for their child. Parents/guardians who no longer seek a place, or who no longer wish to take up a place that has been offered and accepted, are asked to inform the school in writing as soon as possible.

5.8. The Waiting List

If any place accepted for the start of First Year is not taken up, or if in exceptional circumstances the school refuses to enrol an applicant who has accepted an offer of a place, that place is offered to the first applicant on the Waiting List, and so on until the place is accepted. The Waiting List ceases to operate on 30th September after the start of First Year.

5.9. Change of Entry Year

If parents/guardians wish to alter the proposed year of entry for their child a new Application Form must be submitted to the school on or before 30th September two years before the new proposed year of entry to the school.

5.10. Places in the school other than at the start of First Year

As stated above, the Waiting Lists for places at the start of First Year ceases to operate on 30th September after the start of First Year.

In order to deal with applications for places in the school other than at the start of First Year a new waiting list is created for each year group. Applications for places on the new waiting lists are placed on the list in the order in which they are received by the school office.

Parents/guardians should note carefully that:

Names are not transferred from the original Waiting List (for places at the start of First Year) to the new waiting lists (for places other than at the start of First Year), and therefore a new application is required in order to be considered for a place after the start of First Year.

If a vacancy arises in a year group at any time after 30 September of First Year, the Board of Management, in consultation with the Principal, will consider all relevant factors before offering a place to an applicant on the waiting list:

- Preference will be given to Church of Ireland pupils and pupils of other Protestant denominations.
- Priority will be given to siblings of current students.
- A letter explaining why a change of school is sought must be provided
- The pupil must be of an appropriate age to enter the particular class
- Two recent reports from the previous school must be supplied with the application. The previous school will be contacted to obtain information regarding the prospective pupil to clarify any issues arising from their school reports and seek confirmation that admission of the pupil will not impact negatively on the class group.
- Documentation must show satisfactory attendance, punctuality and behaviour in the previous school.
- All prospective students will be interviewed.

The name of any applicant on the new waiting list who accepts or refuses an offer of a place will be removed from the new waiting list.

5.11. Siblings of Applicants who receive a place other than at the start of First Year

In the event that an applicant is offered a place in the school other than at the start of first year from a waiting list or otherwise and accepts that place, and, the applicant has a sibling who applies or has applied, for a place in First Year in a year of entry that has not yet commenced, and has not been offered a place in that class then the sibling will be allocated the priority points according to section 1.1.b above and the relevant waiting list will be revised accordingly.

6. Communication

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the school is made aware of any changes in address or in any other details included in an application form. All correspondence relating to

admissions, other than exchange of documentation such as birth certificates, will be made by email only. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that they maintain a valid email address during the application process and inform the school of any changes to e-mail contact details.

7. Right to refuse Enrolment

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Board of Management, the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to other students, to the school staff or to school property, or would interfere significantly with the educational rights of other students in the school. Where an applicant has attended another secondary school, the school reserves the right to require, in advance of making an enrolment decision, full disclosure of the circumstances surrounding the departure of the applicant from that other school, and the permission of the applicant's parents/guardians to request information relevant to the enrolment decision from that other school. Any refusal to enrol an applicant will be in accordance with Section 15(2)(d) of the Education Act 1998.

8. Appeals

Parents may appeal the decision of the Principal to the Board of Management if they think the above procedures have not been followed.

Section 29 (1) (c) of the Education Act 1998 outlines the procedures for appealing a decision of the Board of Management to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

9. Legislation

The Board of Management will comply with the requirements of the following legislation:

Education Act 1998

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Equal Status Act 2000

10. Effective date and policy changes

This Policy comes into force on 1st September 2017. The Board of Management reserves the right to amend or replace this Policy at any time, whether in response to legislative requirements or otherwise. Offers of places in the school already made at the date of any such amendment or replacement will not be affected.