



St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School

Admissions Policy

May 2020

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 30th May 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School's admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

The link to the online application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School is a voluntary secondary school under the patronage of the Board of Governors, which appoints a Chaplain to the school.

As the ethos of the school is that of the Church of Ireland, we are ecumenical, open and welcoming, believing children learn and benefit greatly from interacting with others of a different background, race or creed. This encourages tolerance and acceptance in our multicultural society.

Our mission is to establish a strong community in which the uniqueness of each individual is appreciated. We seek to instil respect, responsibility, courtesy, care and consideration in all

members of the school community. We endeavour to develop a love of learning in our students and we encourage them to work hard and strive for success in both their academic studies and extra-curricular activities. We try to create an atmosphere which is conducive to learning, in which we can help all students to reach their potential. As students proceed through the school, we expect them to take on more responsibility for their own future prospects through self-motivation. This is to prepare them for further education, their working lives and participation in society.

3. Admission Statement

St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61(3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits, in preference to others, a student who is a member of, or has, through active participation, become an accustomed member of the Church of Ireland or other Protestant churches or reformed traditions of Christianity that are members of the Irish Council of Churches or belongs to an inter-church family 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.

Similarly, the school does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not a member or an accustomed member of the Church of Ireland or other Protestant church or reformed tradition of Christianity and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Admission of Students

St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see Section 5. below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student
- c) It is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

5. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, 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 number of different criteria which are outlined below and which will be incorporated into a points system for those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

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. Points in this category will be awarded at the sole discretion of the Board of Management.

(e) Schools

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

(f) 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.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), a system of random selection will be implemented.

Where one or more applicants are siblings of each other they will be grouped together for the purpose of the random selection process. This grouping will apply to any combination of siblings of the same or similar age including twins.

Music Scholarship

The board of management may, at its sole discretion, offer a small number of places at the start of first year to any prospective students 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 and/or singing. 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.

6. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service.
- b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; other than siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or parents of a student having attended the school (to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).
- g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school. This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned.

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 13](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 14](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

8. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing by email as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see [section 17](#) below for further details).

9. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School, you must indicate—

- (i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- (ii) whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

10. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [section 9](#) above.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be

provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

11. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

12. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

13. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

14. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

Subject to the availability of a place in the relevant year group the Board of Management, in consultation with the Principal, will consider all relevant factors before offering a place to an applicant to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group

- 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 to ensure as far as practicable that admission of the pupil will not impact negatively the health and safety of the students and staff of the school.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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 then the sibling will be allocated the priority points according to section 1.1.b and any relevant waiting list will be revised accordingly.

15. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The board of St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will be then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

17. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.