

ST. PATRICK'S CLASSICAL SCHOOL



ADMISSIONS POLICY

St. Patrick's Classical School

School Address: Moatlands, Navan, Co Meath

Roll number: 64350N

School Patron: Bishop Tom Deenihan

Admissions Policy

Definition: The term 'Admissions' relates to:

1. First Year Admissions and
2. Transfers from other Second Level Schools.

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 Admissions policy was ratified by the school patron on 28 -05-2020. The policy 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 Classical 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 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 Classical School is a Catholic Voluntary Day School, for boys of all abilities and backgrounds, set up in 1930, under the Patronage of the Bishop of Meath, to provide for students whose parent(s)/guardian(s) seek education in the Catholic tradition. As such the school endeavours at all times, through worship, prayer and its Religious Studies programme, to deepen and enrich the faith of all its Catholic students.

“Catholic Ethos” in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) The full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) A living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) A philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) The formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

The school provides religious education in accordance with the doctrines; practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of St. Patrick’s Classical School shall uphold and be accountable to the patron for so upholding the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

The school may also admit boys from other faith traditions whose families are in clear sympathy with the school’s Mission Statement.

3. School Mission Statement:

The mission of St. Patrick’s Classical School is to educate its students according to the best traditions and highest standards of Catholic schooling.

It endeavours at all times to provide, through as wide, as varied and as balanced a curriculum as is possible, for the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural and moral development of all its students.

St. Patrick’s Classical School strives for excellence in all aspects of culture, including sport, drama and music, wherein students are challenged and encouraged to realise their full potential as human beings.

As partners in this education process the Board of Management, Principal, Deputy-Principals, Staff and Parents are also conscious of the importance of encouraging the growth of positive behaviour, the development of leadership skills and the meaningful understanding of all aspects of living with regard to citizenship, family, work and leisure.

Further, we believe that all aspects of school life should be lived in a spirit of justice and charity and that Christian selflessness should be an integral part of our dealings with one another.

4. Policy Statement:

(In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 Section 15 (2) (d))

It is the policy of the Board of Management/Principal/Deputy Principals of St. Patrick's Classical School, in accordance with the School's Founding Principles, the School's Mission Statement and the provisions of the Education Act 1998, to provide for the post-primary needs of boys from the Catholic Diocese of Meath.

The Board of Management operates an open admissions policy, supporting, as far as is practicable and having regard to the resources available, the principle of inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs.

In implementing this policy the Board of Management reserves the right to decide the number of pupils to be accepted by the school each year and the selection criteria and conditions for acceptance and entry.

Because of its nature as a Catholic school for boys, the Board of Management/Principal/Deputy Principals expects that parents and students will accept and support the ethos of the School in a positive and active manner and students will be required to participate positively in religious activities including retreats and liturgies.

5. Admission Statement

St Patrick's Classical 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 Classical School will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

St. Patrick’s Classical School will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4) (b).

St Patrick’s Classical School is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

St Patrick’s Classical 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 a student of the Roman Catholic faith in preference to others.

6. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 7 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

St Patrick's Classical School provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

St Patrick's Classical School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit a person who is not of the Roman Catholic faith where it is proven that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Information Evening:

An Information Evening shall be held for the parent(s)/guardian(s) during the first term. At this meeting, the school ethos will be explained in detail and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be provided with a current Prospective outlining the School's History, Mission Statement, Selection Criteria, Course Programmes, Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Programme, Book Rental Scheme and Extra-curricular Activities as well as details of the School's Enrolment Application Process.

Applicant Pre-conditions:

1. Prior to attending St. Patrick's Classical School applicants must have completed a full course of Primary Education or other approved course as recognised by the Department of Education and Science.
2. An applicant must be aged twelve years on January 1st in the calendar year following the boy's entry into First Year.

7. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice.

Selection Criteria:

The Board of Management will decide on the number of places for new entrants each year. In any year in which First Year application numbers are greater than the number of available places, the allocation of places will be based upon maximum eligibility, priority being given to those students:

- who are of the Catholic Faith
- who are the eldest male sibling in their family
- who have/had a brother/brothers who is/are **currently** attending, or who has/have **previously** attended St. Patrick's Classical School.
- who are sons of past-pupils who completed their Leaving Certificate in St. Patrick's Classical School (up to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admissions notice.)

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

Places will be allocated first to those who fulfil the greatest number of criteria. A lottery or lotteries may be needed subsequently where the number of places available is less than the applicants who fill the next highest number of criteria. These lotteries will be carried out by a representative of the Board of Management, a representative of the Parents Council and the Principal or Deputy Principal and an independent outside agency.

Some places may be offered to students who are not of the Catholic Faith. The Board of Management will decide the number of these places upon each year.

Students from 'other faiths and none' are expected to attend Religious Education classes.

The fulfilment of any one of the above criteria in no way implies that an applicant will be automatically awarded a place.

8. 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;
(With exception of any Student who are sons of past-pupils who completed their Leaving Certificate in St. Patrick's Classical School up 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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

9. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission 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 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 16 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. All admissions are subject to the approval of the Board of Management.

10. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing 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 18 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Patrick's Classical 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 might lead to an offer being withdrawn by 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.”

12. 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 Classical 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 11 above.

13. 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).

14. 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 Classical 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 Classical 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.

Waiting List:

There will be two waiting lists.

1. A numbered waiting list will be drawn by means of a lottery for those applicants who fulfil the greatest number of criteria but who did not gain a place e.g. those who ticked two boxes. The next group who fulfil the next greatest number of criteria e.g. those who ticked one box will be drawn and added to the waiting list. The next group, those who tick no box at all will be drawn and added to the waiting list. Late applicants will be drawn last of all and added to the waiting list.
2. A numbered waiting list for applicants from 'other faiths and none' will be drawn by means of a lottery after the allocation of places to those in this category, as set down by the Board of Management, has taken place. This waiting list will be used in the event of an applicant from this category not accepting the offer of a place. The place will then go to an applicant from this waiting list.

The waiting lists will only be drawn after the total number of places as set down by the Board of Management for applicants who are of the Catholic Faith and those from 'other faiths and none' have been offered and accepted. A lottery or lotteries in the two categories will be used until this number is reached.

15. 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.

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

Applications for transfers are subject to:

1. The student's understanding and acceptance of the School's Mission Statement, Admissions Policy and Selection Criteria as previously outlined in this document.
2. The availability of a place in the particular Year Group in question.
3. The School being satisfied with the reason for the transfer.
4. Information being provided from the student's former school concerning attendance, educational progress, subject choices, term reports, disabilities and special needs.
5. Information being provided in relation to the student's disciplinary record.
6. The School Principal formulating the belief that the student/applicant will contribute positively to the School and not impinge in any way upon the educational development or rights of other students and/or staff.

Application Forms can be obtained on request from the school.

Each Application Form must be accompanied by the prospective student's original Birth Certificate (photocopies will not be accepted). Application Forms not accompanied by a valid Birth Certificate will be deemed invalid.

“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.”

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

The board of St. Patrick’s Classical 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.

18. 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 Classical 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.

19. 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.

The Board of Management approved the School Admissions Policy on the 09-01-2023.

The Board of Management will review the policy annually.

Signed: *Fr. Gerry Stuart*

Fr. Gerry Stuart

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 09-01-2023

Signed: *Mr. Harry Mc Garry*

Mr. Harry Mc Garry

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 09-01-2023

