

ST. PATRICK'S CLASSICAL SCHOOL



ADMISSIONS POLICY

St.Patrick's Classical School

Admissions Policy 2017-2018

Definition: The term 'Admissions' relates to:

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

Founding Principles:

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.

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

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-Principal, 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.

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 Principal 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 primarily for the post-primary needs of boys from parishes in this part of 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 Principal 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.

1. FIRST YEAR ADMISSIONS

Information Evening:

An Information Evening will 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 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.

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 sons of staff members
- 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.

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 number of these places will be decided each year by the Board of Management.

Students from 'other faiths and none' will be 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.

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 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.

Applications:

1. An Open Night/Information Evening for parents and 6th class pupils will be held each year. All local schools will be notified in writing or by email of the date of the Open Night/Information Evening. Application Forms will be distributed on night. Parent(s)/guardian(s) whose son(s) does/do not attend Primary School within the local area can obtain a form(s) on request from the school.
2. 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.
3. The closing date for applications will be determined each school year by the Principal, and will be announced at the open night as well as being displayed on the Application Form. It is the sole responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that the Application Form reaches the school in time. Parent(s)/guardian(s) who return application forms by post/courier must retain proof of postage/delivery. Applications received after the closing date will be deemed invalid.

Decisions:

Decisions relating to all valid applications are made by the Principal on behalf of the Board of Management in accordance with the school’s Admissions Policy. All admissions are subject to the approval of the Board of Management.

Right of Refusal:

Under the Education For Persons With Special Educational Needs Act 2004, the Principal/Board of Management may refuse to enrol a student where the nature or degree of the needs of the prospective student is such that to do so would be inconsistent with:

- The best interests of the student as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under the Act.
- The effective provision of education for students with whom the prospective student is to be educated.

The Principal/Board of Management also reserves the right to refuse to enrol any student where, in the view of the Principal, such a student may pose an unacceptable risk to himself, to other students, to staff or to School property or where the student has special needs such that even with additional resources from the Department of Education and Science, the School cannot provide the student with an appropriate education or place of residence.

Notification:

1. Once all valid applications have been processed, decided upon by the Principal and approved by the Board of Management, parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive notice of the decision(s) in writing.
2. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of successful applicants should sign and return the Form of Acceptance. Failure to return the Form of Acceptance by the closing date will be interpreted as a decision by the parent(s)/guardian(s) to decline the offer of a place.
3. Where a student is not offered a place, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the decision within a reasonable time from the date that the parent or student was informed of the decision and following the conclusion of any appeals procedure provided by the school, in accordance with Section 29 of Education Act 1998, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. On request, the school will provide an Appeal Form and the address to which the Appeal Form may be sent.

Acceptance:

The acceptance of a place in St. Patrick's Classical School is further taken as an agreement on the part of parents and students to fulfil the expectations as expressed in the School Mission Statement and the School's Code of Behaviour.

Assessment:

Successful applicants must attend St. Patrick's Classical School on a date determined by the Principal for Assessment Tests (usually late March or early April) which will consist of a Reading Test, an Aptitude Test and written tests in Irish, English and Mathematics.

The test is used to facilitate the allocation of students into mixed ability classes in First Year.

The results are also used to identify students who may benefit from the School's Learning Support Services.

2. TRANSFERS FROM OTHER SECOND LEVEL SCHOOLS.

Applications for transfers are generally accepted at the beginning of the school year only and 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.

Applications:

Applications must be made in writing to the Principal and must include:

1. Specific details of the reason for the desired transfer.
2. An original Birth Certificate (a photocopy will not be accepted).
3. At least one and preferably two of the prospective student's most recent term reports.

4. A letter of recommendation from the applicant's former school Principal including information on attendance, educational progress, subject choices, disabilities, special educational needs and disciplinary record.

Failure to provide the School with any of the above information or documentation will result in the application being deemed invalid.

Decisions:

Decisions relating to all valid applications are made by the Principal on behalf of the Board of Management in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy. All admissions are subject to the approval of the Board of Management.

Notification:

Once all valid applications have been processed, decided upon by the Principal and approved by the Board of Management, parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive notice of the decision(s) in writing.

Acceptance:

The acceptance of a place in St. Patrick's Classical School is further taken as an agreement on the part of parents and students to fulfil the expectations as expressed in the School Mission Statement and the School's Code of Behaviour.

Appeals:

Where a student is not offered a place, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the decision within a reasonable time from the date that the parent or student was informed of the decision and following the conclusion of any appeals procedure provided by the school, in accordance with Section 29 of Education Act 1998, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. On request, the school will provide an Appeal Form and the address to which the Appeal Form may be sent.

Date of review and ratification by The Board of Management:

28/09/2017