Admissions Policy

St. David's College

Admissions Policy St David's College

School Address: Artane, Dublin 5

School roll number: 60471F

School Patron: The Edmund Rice Schools Trust

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 22/09/2023. 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 David's College 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 David's College is co-educational Catholic voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust '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, and which 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 David's College 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 characteristic spirit of our school is based on the vision and values of the ERST charter. The five characteristics of an Edmund Rice school underpin the operation of St David's secondary school namely:

1. Nurturing Faith, Christian spirituality and gospel based values
2. Promoting partnership
3. Excellence in teaching and learning
4. Creating a caring school community
5. Inspiring transformational leadership.

For further information on the Edmund Rice Schools Trust and the ERST charter, WWW.ERST.IE

St David's College is an inclusive school with an emphasis on traditional Edmund Rice values, such as Irish Language, Music and Sport. We accommodate a large range of levels of academic ability. We offer a wide range of subjects, across the entire curriculum.

The school offers a wide range of extra and co-curricular activities. Every effort is made to ensure that the school is affordable for all parents.

The school marks the liturgical seasons of the Catholic Church and major events are marked with a celebration of Mass. The school has a part-time Chaplain and we participate in events as part of Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders. Our students follow the State programme in Religious Education which is suitable for students of all faiths and none.

3. Admission Statement

St. David's College 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. David's College will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

St David's College will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

(a) the gender of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

(b) the civil status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

(c) the family status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

(d) the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

(e) the religion of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

(f) the disability of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

(g) the race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

(h) membership of the Traveller community of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or

(i) 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 David's College 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 Catholic faith in preference to others.

- St David's College is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

- St David's College is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with Autism and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

St David's College, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 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

Criteria for Refusal of Admission

- St David's College is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student someone who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

- The special class attached to St David's College provides an education exclusively for students with Autism and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have a diagnosis of Autism.

The following evidence is required in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Special Educational Needs (e.g. Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11; psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report)

AND

- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.

6. 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:

1. A sibling of current St. David's College Students
2. The applicant attends a local feeder primary school (in no particular order)
   - St David's BNS,Artane
   - Scoil Chiaráin, Donnycarney
   - St Fiachra's, Beaumont
   - St. Brigids GNS, Killester,
   - St John of God, Artane,
   - Our Lady of Consolation, Donnycarney
3. A sibling of a past pupil of St. David's College
4. The applicant has a parent who previously attended the school (maximum of 25% of available places)
5. Any remaining applicants

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:

Lottery

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places a lottery will be held to determine to whom the places will be allocated. In the event that twins are applying for places in such a lottery then they will be offered two places unless only one place remains.

In the event that the Special Class is oversubscribed priority may be given to:

Students already enrolled in the school with the required diagnosis as outlined in Section 4 and the supporting evidence as outlined in Section 6.

7. 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 factors in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school.

Criteria not considered

(a) a student's prior attendance at a preschool or pre-school service, including naíonraí

(b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school

(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
other than in relation to admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned

(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 selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and (2) parents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents having attended, a school may only apply this criterion 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St David's College 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 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 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.

9. 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St David's College, 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

(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.

11. 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 David's College 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 10 above.

(v) 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. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school."

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act allows for the sharing of certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

13. 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 David's College 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 David's College 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.

14. 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.

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

Admission of Students 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:

The application is considered by the Principal on behalf of the Board of Management and a decision is made whether to offer the applicant a place in the school.

The BOM has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. Application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which the admission is sought, are as follows:

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

The Board of St David's College or any persons acting on its behalf will not 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

Religious Instruction

The 1998 Education Act states that schools are required to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students (Section 9 (d)). At St David's College the allocated time on the timetable for Religious Education responds to this.

St David's College places great importance on the religious or spiritual formation of all its students. Each student has his own personal journey which will be encouraged and respected. Students who opt out of RE class will not be offered extra tuition or study periods.

The following are the school's arrangements for parents of students and students (over 18) who have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school:

Parents of students and students over 18 who wish to opt out of RE class should make a written request to the principal.

- A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss their options. Throughout this process the constitutional right of the parent/ student (over 18 years) will be respected by the school.
- Students who opt out of RE class are required to use this time to study material relating to their own religious tradition or belief, for example sacred texts.
- Students of no religious faith, who opt out of RE class, are required to study relevant literature or philosophical texts. A list of suggested texts can be provided by the school. In line with the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter.

These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students.

18. Reviews/appeals

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 and must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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. This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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. This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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) This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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). This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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.