

Admission Policy of St. Patrick's Senior National School

School Address: Corduff, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15

Roll number: 19636D

School Patron: Catholic Archbishop of Dublin

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 20th October 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 Senior National School 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 SNS, Corduff is a Catholic Co-educational Senior Primary School under the patronage of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims to promote:

- (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 for the pupils 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 SNS 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.

Aims of St. Patrick's SNS

The following are the agreed aims of the school:

- To promote the fullest possible development of each child as an individual and as a member of society.
- To promote attitudes and habits related to spiritual fulfilment and to ensure a sound social, moral and religious development.
- To encourage the child to be self-confident, independent, tolerant, kind and co-operative.
- To endeavour to ensure that, at a minimum, each child will achieve a competence, appropriate to his/ her ability, in literacy and basic mathematical concepts and operations.
- To ensure that all activities, policies and programmes are developed and delivered with respect and that a positive celebration of difference is cultivated, always being mindful of the moral, conscientious, religious, linguistic and cultural principles of all within the school community

3. Admission Statement

St. Patrick's SNS 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 SNS is a co-educational 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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Patrick's SNS is a school which has established classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to these classes 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. Patrick's SNS, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with a Mild General Learning Disability and a class to provide education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder with the emphasis being on ultimately integrating children into the mainstream.

Other children with a variety of Special Educational Needs can also be accommodated within the mainstream setting..

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

St. Patrick's SNS is a school of the Catholic denomination and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special classes attached to St. Patrick's SNS provides an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder(ASD) and students with a Mild General Learning Disability and the school may refuse admission to these classes, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in these classes. (See Appendix 1)

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

- a. Children of St. Patrick's JNS.
- b. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and children resident in the parish of Corduff (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
- c. Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
- d. Children residing outside the parish/catchment area (the eldest child will also have priority in this ranking)

All criteria should be on the basis that the eldest child has priority

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:

In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

In the Autism Spectrum Disorder Class, in the event of oversubscription, priority will be given to older children. Names will be placed on a waiting list for the duration of one academic year only, for which the application was originally made. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

In the MGLD Class, in the event of oversubscription, priority will be given to older children. Names will be placed on a waiting list for the duration of one academic year only, for which the application was originally made. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

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 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 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 either the MGLD or ASD 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, siblings of a student attending or having attended the school as per Enrolment Criteria
- (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. Patrick's SNS 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. Patrick's SNS, 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.

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. Patrick's SNS 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.

12. 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 certain information 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).

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. Patrick's SNS 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 SNS 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.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

15. 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:

Pupils may transfer to St. Patrick's S.N.S. at any time subject to the school policy and available space, and in some cases the approval of the Department of Education and Skills. A notice of enrolment will be issued and relevant information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress will be requested (Education Welfare Act).

The School's Code of Behaviour will be attached and parents will be requested to read and sign it.

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 admission is sought, are as follows:

Pupils may transfer to St. Patrick's S.N.S. at any time subject to the school policy and available space, and in some cases the approval of the Department of Education and Skills. A notice of the enrolment will be issued and relevant information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress will be requested. (Education Welfare Act). The School's Code of Behaviour will be attached and parents will be requested to read and sign it.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St. Patrick's SNS 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

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school.

A meeting will take place between the parents and the school Principal to make suitable arrangements. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students.

18. 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.

Appendix 1:

Enrolment Application Procedure for the ASD Class

Our ASD class has a maximum capacity of six pupils. In setting up the class, the BOM is committed to developing an educational setting which is focused on the needs of the pupils and enables learning to take place in a safe environment, in which pupils with ASD learn a range of skills that will facilitate their making a gradual transition into mainstream classes with their own age cohort. Parental involvement in the pupils' learning is encouraged and valued. It ensures consistency between the pupils' various learning environments.

The teaching methodologies employed in the ASD class will be those that are deemed most appropriate by the school, to the individual pupil's learning needs.

Criteria for Admission to the ASD Class:

The total number of places in the class is six. Applications must be in writing to the school and the applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

- An applicant will be enrolled in the class when s/he is 8 years of age on or before the 1st September of the academic year for which the application is made
- Students in our ASD class will transfer to post-primary education at the age of 12, i.e. before the start of the next school year following their 12th birthday.
- A fully completed, signed and dated application form for enrolment has been submitted to the school by the Parents and a vacancy exists in the ASD class.
- The applicant must have a primary diagnosis of a qualifying autism spectrum disorder and the applicant must submit a professional report which confirms a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder (DSM IV/V or ICD 10) and contains a recommendation to attend an ASD class attached to a mainstream school. Such a recommendation cannot be dated more than two years prior to the proposed admission date and confirms that the diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder was made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure.
- If the applicant with autism presents with a general learning disability, the diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure and the report confirming this must be submitted with the application form.
- If the application form is not fully completed, and/or all the required reports have not been furnished, the application will be deemed incomplete. The Parents will be notified that the application will not be considered until a complete application is submitted.
- The application will be assessed by the ASD Enrolment Advisory board, who will advise the BOM on the application.
- The BOM will decide on the acceptance or otherwise of the application.
- In the event that the number of applicants seeking enrolment into the ASD class exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list.

- If offered a place, the parents must confirm in writing within 7 calendar days that the place is being accepted. If this confirmation is not received within that time, the school will take it that the place is not being accepted and the place will be reallocated.
- A waiting list will be maintained for the duration of the academic year only, for which the application was initially made.

Placement and Continuing Placement of a Pupil in the ASD Class

*children already enrolled in our mainstream setting in St. Patrick's Senior National School with a recommendation for a Special Class setting will take preference in the application process.

- Pupils will be "phased in" gradually to the ASD class through a mutually agreed process between the school and the Parents
- The individual needs of each pupil are constantly reviewed to ensure that the ASD class is the appropriate setting to meet the pupil's needs. A review of each pupil's progress and his/her Individual Education Profile will be carried out in consultation with Parents and other professionals where necessary.
- The school reserves the right to review the pupil's progress at the end of each academic year to determine whether the ASD class continues to be an appropriate placement for him/her.

ASD Class Enrolment Advisory Board

- The Advisory Board consists of the school Principal, a member of the BOM and the teacher from the ASD class. The Advisory Board will advise the BOM on the applications for places in the ASD class
- The decision as to the placement of an applicant in the ASD class lies with the BOM.
- Places are allocated in the ASD class on condition that the appropriate resources are provided and continue to be provided, by the National Council for Special Education ('NCSE') and the DES.

Enrolment Application Procedure for the MGLD Class

An application may be made for children diagnosed with MGLD to the SENO by the SEN Co-Coordinator for a place in the Special Class in St. Patrick's S.N.S. The maximum capacity of the special class is currently 11 children. The SENO will decide if a child with MGLD is entitled to a place and where there are places available, a **concessionary place** may be offered to a child with BMGLD.

Children with BMGLD will be subject to the same criteria as outlined in this policy as children with MGLD for a place in the Special Class. Priority will be given to children with MGLD over those with BMGLD. If a child with MGLD that meets the criteria

requires a placement and the class is full, the child with BMGLD will forgo their position in the Special Class.

If there is more than one child with BMGLD in the Special Class, the decision of which child's place will be rescinded will be based on a review of the children in the class with BMGLD by the Admissions Committee (Principal, SEN Co- Coordinator, Special Class Teacher and relevant teachers). Some of the factors taken into consideration will be FSIQ, progress of the child, recent assessment results, care needs of the pupil, recommendations in report, additional information from other reports e.g., speech and language Occupational Therapy, medical etc., consultation with parents and class teachers.

Procedure for enrolment for MGLD Class

- An enrolment form provided by the school must be filled out by the parents/guardians on behalf of the child. This form should be accompanied by an original birth certificate.
- A recent psychological assessment or report from a multi-disciplinary team should be provided. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide all documentation required. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a Clinical psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Social Worker and a Physiotherapist. All relevant reports should be provided to the school and they should clearly outline the child's full scale IQ and have a professional recommendation for a special class placement.
- Once a parent/guardian has made an application to the school for a place in the MGLD class on behalf of the child, the SEN Co-ordinator/Principal will make an application to the SENO.
- The Principal will communicate the SENO's decision to the parents/guardians. This communication should be by letter.

If a child with Borderline Mild General Learning Disability is offered a place, the parents must be informed in writing that this place is temporary.

- The parents/guardians of a child being offered a place in the class will be invited to visit the school. They will meet the Principal and the relevant class teachers.
- The parents/guardians of a child who is in another school may be asked to consent to a visit by our SEN team to observe the child in their current school setting prior to their transfer.
- The parents/guardians will be invited on another occasion to come with their child to meet the teacher of the MGLD class to see the classroom.

Behaviour

It is accepted that children with special educational needs may display difficult & challenging behaviours associated with their diagnosis. All efforts will be made by the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies, through the implementation of the child's individual education plan, in consultation with the child's parents/guardians.

All children including pupils with special needs are subject to the School Code of Behaviour & Health & Safety Statement.