



## Senior School Admissions Policy

### INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Board of Governors (the School Patron), the Board of Management determines the Admissions Policy of the school and the maximum number of pupils in the school. The Board of Management reserves the right to review the Admissions Policy from time to time. Allocation of places to pupils is made by the Headmistress based on criteria determined by the Board of Management. For further details of the College, please refer to the College website at [www.st-andrews.ie](http://www.st-andrews.ie). The Admissions Policy is guided by the characteristic spirit and aims of the College.

This Admissions 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 27 July 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hard copy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St Andrew'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.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St Andrew'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.

## **1. ETHOS STATEMENT**

St Andrew's College was founded in 1894 by the Presbyterian Community of Dublin. Today, it is a flourishing interdenominational, co-educational school whose philosophy and objectives are based upon the liberal, inclusive and principled Christian ethos inherited from its founders. Admission to the College is subject to criteria which reflect this philosophy and maintain the distinctive character of the school.

Our Admissions Policy endeavours to support a broadly-based, co-educational environment, undertakes, in so far as is practicable, to educate boys and girls from the same family together, strives to preserve an inter-denominational and international mix in its student body, recognises the valuable contribution made by past pupils, and reserves the right to decide upon special cases which may arise from time to time.

To meet its obligations effectively, the College has evolved a system of admissions which gives priority to those children for whom the school was established. To this end, the College recognises a number of groups of children as coming within this framework.

## **2. THE AIMS OF THE POLICY ARE:**

- a) To reflect the school ethos in determining policies for admissions.
- b) To accept students without the use of any entrance examination to qualify for entry
- c) To reflect the co-educational nature of the student body
- d) To provide for children with special educational needs and disabilities in so far as facilities and resources are available to do so
- e) To operate some flexibility to take account of special circumstances e.g. children of families relocated at short notice to live in the area
- f) To respect the constitutional and legal right of all applicants in a spirit of inclusiveness

## **3. THE SCHOOL**

The school is fee-paying. The level of the fees is set each year by the Board of Management of the school, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors of St Andrew's College.

The school fees due in respect of a student must be paid in accordance with the terms set out in the invoice requesting payment to enable the student to progress to the next academic year. A student's progress to the following academic year is subject to there being no outstanding Senior School or Junior School fees relating to the Student, or his or her siblings.

#### **4. PRIOR EDUCATION**

Under the Department of Education and Skills Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools, secondary school students must be aged 12 years on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January in the calendar year following the student's entry into First Year and have completed Primary Education.

#### **5. ADMISSION STATEMENT**

St Andrew's College 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 Andrew'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 Presbyterian denomination or Mainstream Protestant denomination or Reformed Traditions of Christianity.

## 6. ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where:-

- a) The school is oversubscribed (see section 10 below for further details)
- b) A parent of a student, when required by the Headmistress 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 he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student.
- c) The Application does not comply with Section 3 of this Policy.

St Andrew's College is a Protestant school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Presbyterian denomination or Mainstream Protestant denomination or Reformed Traditions of Christianity whereby it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

## 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. However, St Andrew's College is a fee charging school, and Section 3 of this policy applies to admission.
- c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- d) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- e) 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;

- (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or
- (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, St Andrew's College will only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice.

f) 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 Andrew's College will be based on the following:

- Our school's Admissions Policy
- The school's annual admission notice for the relevant school year
- 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.

## **9. NOTIFYING APPLICANTS OF DECISION**

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 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. OVERSUBSCRIPTION**

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the Headmistress of the College, on behalf of the Board of Management will 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 schools' annual admission notice.

The following criteria will be applied in the following order:

*Category 1 (a):*

Presbyterian Children (see Appendix 1) attending a Recognised Feeder School (Appendix 3).

*Category 1 (b):*

Presbyterian children not attending a Recognised Feeder School.

*Category 2 (a):*

Children from the mainstream Protestant denominations, or Reformed Traditions of Christianity, (see Appendix 2) attending a Recognised Feeder School

*Category 2 (b):*

Children from the mainstream Protestant denominations, or Reformed Traditions of Christianity, not attending a Recognised Feeder School

*Category 3:*

Children who have completed Sixth Class in our Junior School

*Category 4:*

Siblings of students who are attending St Andrew's College

*Category 5:*

Children not in Categories 1 or 2 who are attending a Recognised Feeder School

*Category 6:*

Children of permanent staff members of St Andrew's College

*Category 7:*

Children/grandchildren of a parent/grandparent who is a former student, provided this category does not exceed 25% of the places offered in Form 1.

*Category 8:*

Children whose parents are relocating to Ireland from a foreign country. The relocation to Ireland must have taken place within 3 months of the application or be due to take place at the time of application.

*Category 9:*

All others whose parents/guardians have completed an application form for that specific Year of Entry.

Random selection will apply in the case of each of the above criteria where two or more students are tied for a place. The random selection will be done by the Headmistress in the presence of the Chair of the Board of Management.

In addition to the above, the Board of Management reserves the right to allocate ten (10) places each year for international students. Any places from this allocation not taken up by international students will be made available to general applicants.

## **11. ACCEPTANCE OF A PLACE**

Acceptance of an offer of a place in the College will be conditional on the College receiving, within the specified time period:

- A signed and completed Confirmation of Acceptance Form
- A copy of the applicant's birth certificate
- A copy of the College's Code of Behaviour for Students and Acceptable Usage Policy (enclosed with the Offer Letter), signed by the applicant and his/her parents/guardians indicating acceptance of the College's rules on discipline and other matters.
- A €2,000 **non-refundable** deposit which will be deducted from the first term's fees.

### **Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from St Andrew'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 and
- ii whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

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

Acceptance of a place in the College is taken as acceptance of all College policies. Refusal to sign the Code of Behaviour for Students and Acceptable Usage Policy or to accept school disciplinary procedures will invalidate the application and lead to the loss of a place in the College.

Demand for places in the College is high and the Board of Management is keen to ensure that places are offered to children who wish to take up the allocation. In the past, some applicants have failed to notify the College that they are not taking up an allocated place in St Andrew's College until just

before the commencement of term. This has led to other applicants being deprived of a place, or only joining St Andrew's College after already having made a commitment to another school.

## **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 Andrew'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 Headmistress 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.

As a fee-charging school, St Andrew's College reserves the right to refuse to admit an applicant where fees remain outstanding in respect of the applicant's family.

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.

## **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 Andrew'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 Andrew'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.

#### **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**

**A. 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 for admission to St Andrew's College will be subject to a vacancy in a suitable class and also to the availability of space in desired option subjects and relevant subject levels.

The categories outlined in section 10 above will be used for selection purposes.

Random selection will apply in the case of each of the above criteria where two or more students are tied for a place. The random selection will be done by the Headmistress in the presence of the Chair of the Board of Management.

All students falling into this category will be invited to meet the Headmistress or her representative for the purpose of familiarising them with the the College and its policies. The student and his/her family's understanding of and alignment to the philosophy and ethos of St Andrew's College is paramount and will form an integral aspect of the selection process. The school the student is leaving will be contacted for information which will inform the college's approach to supporting the student should they be offered a place. This information may include:

- prospective student's attendance record,
- educational progress to date, (to facilitate appropriate form and subject class and school programme placement)
- behaviour record
- educational or psychological assessments
- other relevant information

Prior to the offer of a place consideration will also be given to:

- subject choice and availability

The application for enrolment will be considered in the light of all the above and any other relevant information.

**B. 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:**

In the event that a place exists in the relevant year and there is no waiting list, the following will apply:

The Headmistress or her representative will invite the student and his/her family to attend a meeting to ensure that the student and his/her family have a full acceptance of the Code of Behaviour of the school.

The student and his/her family's understanding of, and alignment to, the philosophy and ethos of St Andrew's College is paramount and will form an integral aspect of the selection process. The school the student is leaving will be contacted for information which will inform the college's approach to supporting the student should they be offered a place. This information may include:

- prospective student's attendance record,
- educational progress to date, (to facilitate appropriate form and subject class and school programme placement)
- behaviour record,
- educational or psychological assessments
- other relevant information

Prior to the offer of a place consideration will also be given to:

- subject choice and availability

The application for admission to St Andrew's College will be subject to a vacancy in a suitable class and also to the availability of space in desired option subjects and relevant subject levels.

The application for enrolment will be considered in the light of all the above and any other relevant information.

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. ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION**

Religion – as distinct from Religious Instruction - is offered as an optional Leaving Certificate subject. In addition, all First and Second Year students have one period of Critical Thought, Behaviour and

Belief. This subject cannot be viewed by a prospective parent as religious instruction and therefore students are not permitted to 'opt out' whereby the school would have to provide another option.

## 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.

## **19. APPEALS**

Appeals against the College's failure to enrol a student should be made in writing to the Board of Management who may decide if an oral hearing is necessary.

## **20. NOTICE PERIOD**

A full term's notice is required in writing before the removal of a pupil from school or the next term's fees will be charged. Similarly, a term's notice must be given to discontinue an extra subject.

The board of St. Andrew's College or any persons acting on its behalf in accordance with section 64 of the Education Act 1998, as amended, may charge fees for or seek payment as a condition of :-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, which is non-refundable
- (b) a deposit on acceptance of a place,
- (c) school fees and extra charges for continued enrolment of a student in the school

**Approved by:**

**Chairperson of the Board of Management**

**Date:**

## Appendix 1 – Claiming Presbyterian Church Affiliation

The Board believes that it is essential to the maintenance of the ethos and characteristic spirit of the school that applicants who are members of the Presbyterian Church should be a key part of the school community. ***Applicants with a Presbyterian Church affiliation are children who are certified to the College in a prescribed form (available from the Admissions Office) by the Presbyterian Minister for the time being of their congregation as being members of the Presbyterian Church.***

If you think that your child qualifies for a Presbyterian Church affiliation, you should email the Admissions Office [admissions@st-andrews.ie](mailto:admissions@st-andrews.ie) to receive a Presbyterian Church affiliation form which should be completed and returned to the Admissions Office directly. The obligation rests with applicants to complete this form and return it to the Admissions Office within the time indicated on the form. The Admissions Secretary will then forward the form to the relevant Presbyterian Minister for verification.

Priority for a Presbyterian Church affiliation shall only apply where an applicant has completed a Presbyterian Church affiliation form and where that form has been verified by the relevant Minister and returned with the application form during the period specified in our annual Admissions Notice for receiving applications.

## Appendix 2 – Claiming Protestant Church Affiliation

The Board believes that it is essential to the maintenance of the ethos and characteristic spirit of the school that applicants that are members of Protestant denominations, or Reformed Traditions of Christianity should be a key part of the school community. ***Applicants with a Protestant Church affiliation are children who are certified to the College in a prescribed form (available from the Admissions Office) by the Rector or relevant Church Minister for the time being of their parish as being members of that particular Protestant Church or Congregation.***

If you think that your child qualifies for a Protestant Church affiliation, you should email the Admissions Office [admissions@st-andrews.ie](mailto:admissions@st-andrews.ie) to receive a Protestant Church affiliation form, which should be completed and returned to the Admissions Office directly. The obligation rests with applicants to complete this form and return it to the Admissions Office within the time indicated on the form. The Admissions Secretary will then forward the form to the relevant Rector or relevant Church Minister for verification.

Priority for a Protestant Church affiliation shall only apply where an applicant has completed a Protestant Church affiliation form and and where that form has been verified by the relevant Minister and returned with the application form during the period specified in our annual Admissions Notice for receiving applications.

### Appendix 3 - Feeder schools to St Andrew's College

The national schools at present recognised as feeder schools to St Andrew's are:

- All Saints National School
- Booterstown National School, Cross Avenue, Booterstown
- Burrow National School
- Delgany National School
- Glenageary/Killiney National School (Wyvern)
- Greenlanes National School
- Howth Road National School
- Kill o'The Grange National School
- Kilternan National School
- Our Lady of Mercy National School
- Rathmichael National School
- St Andrew's National School Bray
- St Andrew's National School Malahide
- St Brigid's National School Stillorgan
- St Matthew's National School Irishtown/Sandymount
- St Patrick's National School Dalkey
- St Patrick's National School Greystones
- Taney National School

#### **Important note**

At the time of its ratification by the Board of Management on 28 April 2020, the Admissions Policy was in full compliance with all relevant legislation, including the Education Act 1998, as amended, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act 2000, as amended. Further commencement of the Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018, however, may lead to changes to the school's Admission Policy which may affect the status of applications or expressions of interest already on file in the school.

Students applying to the College for **admission, who are not already admitted to the school at the time of the annual intake to First Year**, will always be interviewed and the school the student is leaving will be contacted for a reference and information relating to:

- prospective student's attendance record,
- educational progress to date,
- behaviour record,

Also to be considered is:

- Subject choice
- Impact on the learning environment for other students in the classroom will be required.
- The application for admission to St Andrew's College should be judged in the light of this information and subject to a vacancy in a suitable programme or class and also to the availability of space in subject options and higher maths classes.

If applicable a psychological assessment must be provided to the College.

The enrolment application will be considered in the light of this entire assessment.