

## **Admission Policy of St. Paul's School**

**Beech Hill  
Montenotte  
Cork  
T23 P529**

**Roll number: 19203S**

**School Patron: Bishop of Cork and Ross**

### **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/guardians of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 24th September 2025. 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. Paul's 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. Paul's School is under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross. The denominational character of the school is Roman Catholic. The ethos of the school is Christian in the Catholic tradition. The school has 7 classes for pupils with moderate/severe general learning disabilities and 8 classes for pupils with severe/profound general learning disabilities. Prospective pupils must be at least aged 4 and not older than aged 18 by the last day of August of the year in question. The school caters for 97 pupils in total.

St. Paul's School is a happy, safe and stimulating environment in which the pupils can learn and develop to the very best of their abilities. Everything centres around the pupils, who are eager and willing to learn. We wish to promote this enthusiasm and environment of learning throughout everything we do.

### 3. Admission Statement

St. Paul's will not discriminate in its admission of a pupil to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil 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. Paul's is a school which, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a pupil who does not have the category of needs specified.
- St. Paul's will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in the performance by the council of its functions under the education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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. Paul's will comply with any direction served on the patron or board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education act 1988.

#### 4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school

St. Paul's School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students with a moderate, severe or profound intellectual disability.

**Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in St. Paul's when the following is provided in support of such an application:**

**Professional Reports Outlining:**

- Diagnosis of special educational needs: moderate or severe/profound intellectual disability as confirmed by a psychologist's report included in the application, which includes a recommendation for a special school.

**And**

- A demonstration of the understanding of the complexity of the pupils overall level of need/s as evidenced in the professional reports.

**And**

- A letter from the NCSE confirming the pupil is known to them and that the pupil has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special school for moderate, severe/profound intellectual disabilities.

**And**

- Reports from other schools/ childcare settings, as appropriate.

#### 5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each pupil seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#) below for further details)
- b) a parent/guardian 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 Policy and the Code of Conduct for Parents Policy is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the pupil.

St. Paul's School provides an education exclusively for students with moderate, severe or profound intellectual disabilities and may refuse admission to a student, where the pupil does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this school.

- Each application must have a psychological cognitive assessment stating that the applicant has a diagnosis of moderate, severe/profound intellectual disability,
- A completed application form,
- An original birth certificate,
- Letter from the SENO, and
- Reports from other child care settings/schools, as appropriate.
- All decisions on places are contingent on the availability of a suitable vacancy relevant to the educational needs and age of an applicant.

Class groupings vary each year as pupils graduate. While the school may choose to move pupils from one class to another if their needs would be better met, it is not guaranteed and parents/guardians do not have the right to have pupils moved to a class of their choosing.

## 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:

### **Criteria:**

- (1) Priority is given to past pupils of the school who may have unsuccessfully transferred to another school.
- (2) Applications for children seeking placement from junior school for pupils with a mild general learning disability – Scoil Eanna and senior school for pupils with a mild general learning disability – Scoil Bernadette, will be given priority based on whose age and ability matches the grouping where a class vacancy occurs.
- (3) The needs of prospective pupils and the available class places in the school

In the event that there are two or more pupils 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 and inform the Admissions Committee:

- Which pupil has the greater need
- Other options available to the pupils
- Age of the pupils

## 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 pupil on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a pupil's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service other than in relation to a pupil's prior attendance at— (I) an early intervention class, or (II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a pupil's parent/guardians;
- (d) a requirement that a student, or his or her parent/guardians, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (e) a pupil's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;  
(other than, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a pupil attending or having attended the school

- (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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026 only).

## 8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Paul's School will be based on the following:

- The school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- 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
- The information provided in the up-to-date psychological assessment (*within 2 years of date of application for under 7 yr. olds; within 4 years of date of application for all*

*others*) stating that the child's primary disability falls within the moderate, severe or profound learning disability category

- The information provided by members of the Admissions Committee following a visit to the child's current educational placement
- The recommendation of the Schools Admissions Committee and subsequent approval by the Board of Management
- Letter from the SENO

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 pupil is not offered a place in St. Paul's School, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant.

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**

A letter of acceptance must be returned to St. Paul's School within 7 days of the date on the letter of offer. If written acceptance is not received within 7 days the place will be offered to another child. In accepting an offer of admission from St. Paul's, you must indicate –

- (a) Whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission from another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer you must provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- (b) Whether or not you have applied for and are awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so you must provide details of the 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. Paul's School where

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent/guardian of a pupil, 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 and the Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such codes.
- (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**

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 pupils.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another Board of Management with a list of pupils 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 pupil's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the 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 pupils whose applications for admission to St. Paul's School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Paul's School is in the order of priority assigned to the pupils' 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 pupils on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the pupils 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 decided upon according to our school's Admission 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 3 working weeks after the date on which the school received the completed application form and documentation.

### **15. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees**

This rule applies to all schools.

The Board of St. Paul's School 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 pupil to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a pupil in the school.

### **15. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

The following are the school's arrangements for pupils, where the parent/guardian has requested that the pupil attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such pupils. Other curricular work will be arranged in consultation with the parents.

### **16. Reviews/appeals**

#### **Review of decisions by the board of Management**

The parent/guardian of the pupil 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 parent/guardian of 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/guardian of the pupil 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 parent/guardian of 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 parent/guardian of 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.

Signed: Jerry Corkery

Date:

Chairperson