



Admission Policy of St. Fintan's High School

School Address: Sutton, Dublin 13. D13 HN59

Roll number: 60370W

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 11th May 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. Fintan's High 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. Fintan's High School is an all-boys 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. Fintan's High School 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."

As an Edmund Rice School, St Fintan's High School upholds the five Key Elements of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter:

- Nurturing Faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel based values;
- Promoting partnership in the school community;
- Excelling in teaching and learning;
- Creating a caring school community;
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

The characteristic spirit of St. Fintan's High School is reflected in the manner in which we live out our Christian ethos in the school. St. Fintan's High School is a Catholic school where every student is valued equally and given a genuine experience of belonging. Due to the universal, non-discriminatory nature of Catholicism and the value it places on ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, St. Fintan's High School is open to the admission of pupils of all faiths and none. St. Fintan's High School celebrates diversity and values difference, and

every student is cherished for his uniqueness and individuality. The presence of children from other denominations is seen as an enrichment of the educational experience offered by the school and as a practical expression of the commitment to inclusivity.

St. Fintan's High School is committed to the moral, social and spiritual development of each student and all students are encouraged to strive for excellence in all areas of life and work and to use their talents in the service of God and of the community. Academic excellence and participation in sport and the arts are strongly fostered and encouraged.

The Catholic ethos of the school is reflected in many ways.

- The ethos of the school permeates the school day.
- In St. Fintan's High School, Religious Education is a core subject on the school curriculum and an integral part of the school, and students encounter our Gospel Values during R.E. classes.
- Prayer and sacramental experience play an important role in our school. We celebrate together to mark key times throughout the year.
- Mass is celebrated a number of times throughout the school year to mark special occasions such as the opening of the school year and graduations, and on other occasions as deemed appropriate.
- Our Sacred Space in the school assembly area is decorated according to the liturgical seasons and to celebrate times of special religious significance.
- Copies of the bible are available to students for class use as well as to take home.
- A retreat is undertaken by all Transition Year students.
- Students participate in a number of Edmund Rice initiatives. Students are encouraged to live out the spirit of Edmund Rice by playing an active role in responding to the needs of others.
- Charity work is an integral part of how we as a school foster a sense of care, compassion and community which characterised Jesus' life. An awareness of social issues and action for social justice is at the forefront of our response to our ethos as an Edmund Rice School. We undertake an immersion trip to Zambia every second year to work with the children in New Sables School in Kabwe. We have associations with many charities such as St. Vincent de Paul, Trócaire, GOAL, Pieta House, Donal Walsh Live Life Foundation, Focus Ireland, Bóthar, and the Peter McVerry Trust, as well as other, local charities. Through working with and experiencing the work of these various charities, students are encouraged and challenged to become agents of social change.
- Catholic Schools Week is celebrated each year in our school and is a time of special importance in our school calendar.
- Edmund Rice Day is celebrated every year in May.
- As part of living out our ethos as an Edmund Rice School we strive to foster a spirit of inclusivity in everything we do. It is our aim to embrace and celebrate diversity amongst our students. Some of the practical steps we take to achieve this include the organisation of a cultural, inclusion and diversity day, the reading of prayers in different languages during liturgies and the study of world religions.

3. Admission Statement

St. Fintan's High School 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. Fintan's High School is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

St. Fintan's High School 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. Fintan's High School 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.

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

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. Fintan's High School provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

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

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:

1. Brothers of students currently enrolled in St. Fintan's High School.
2. Brothers of students previously enrolled in St. Fintan's High School.
3. Sons and grandsons of past pupils, up to a maximum of 25% of the total places available.
4. Sons of current, permanent staff members.
5. Boys attending the following feeder schools and residing in the parishes of Baldoyle, Sutton, Bayside and Howth:
 Scoil Mhuire, Howth
 St. Fintan's National School, Sutton
 Scoil Mhuire agus Iosaif, Bayside
 St. Laurence's National School, Baldoyle
 Burrow National School, Sutton
6. Other boys residing in the parishes of Baldoyle, Sutton, Bayside and Howth.
7. Other boys attending schools in the parishes of Baldoyle, Sutton, Bayside and Howth.
8. Boys from all other schools within the Howth Deanery and Belgrove Boys Senior National School.
9. Boys from other primary schools.

Please note that multiple applications from siblings for enrolment in 1st Year will be treated as a single application, although all names will be entered in the lottery. If the name of one is drawn, the others will automatically be allocated places.

Note. The geographical boundaries of a parish as specified in this Admissions Policy are as those defined by the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin. (See www.dublindiocese.ie)

Note. Students attending schools within the Central Application for Post Primary Schools (CAPPS)/Deanery area can ONLY apply on the CAPPS Form

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:

At the end of each of the above criteria, if the number of applicants is greater than the number of places remaining, then a lottery draw will apply to establish the order of applicants on the waiting list.
 This lottery draw will be independently witnessed and verified.

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;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his 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: (1) brothers of current or past pupils and (2) and sons or grandsons of past pupils.

In relation to (2), this criterion will apply 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. Fintan's High School 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 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 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. Fintan's High School, 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. Fintan's High 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 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.

Please also note that 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.

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.

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. Fintan's High 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. Fintan's High School 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

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:

St. Fintan's High School will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer to our school.

The Board of Management will decide on applications for admission to any year other than First Year by applying the following criteria:

- A transfer is in agreement with School Admission Policy
- All relevant information from the former school has been made available.
- A transfer is of educational benefit to the student.
- A transfer is in the best interest of the student.
- A transfer is in the best interest of the school.
- Availability of optional subjects chosen by applicants.

Where a student is considered for a place, the decision will be taken by the Board of Management in consultation with the student's parents/guardians, his former school and, if necessary, the Education Welfare Officer. In some instances, it may be possible to offer a place immediately. In other cases, entry may be offered from the beginning of the next academic year.

Applicants must complete the Application Form, giving all the details required. Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation required on the Application Form within 21 days, or to supply any other relevant documentation required by the school will result in an applicant not being offered a place in the school.

The school will respond to each application within 21 school days of receiving it but may not be in a position to make a decision on some applications until later in the school year when its current students have given an indication to the school authorities of their intention to return to the school in the forthcoming academic year.

Application Forms are available from the school office on request.

Please also note that 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.

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:

St. Fintan's High School will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer to our school.

The Board of Management will decide on applications for admission to any year other than First Year by applying the following criteria:

- A transfer is in agreement with School Admission Policy
- All relevant information from the former school has been made available.
- A transfer is of educational benefit to the student.
- A transfer is in the best interest of the student.
- A transfer is in the best interest of the school.
- Availability of optional subjects chosen by applicants.

Where a student is considered for a place, the decision will be taken by the Board of Management in consultation with the student's parents/guardians, his former school and, if necessary, the Education Welfare Officer. In some instances, it may be possible to offer a place immediately. In other cases, entry may be offered from the beginning of the next academic year.

Applicants must complete the Application Form, giving all the details required. Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation required on the Application Form within 21 days, or to supply any other relevant documentation required by the school will result in an applicant not being offered a place in the school.

The school will respond to each application within 21 school days of receiving it but may not be in a position to make a decision on some applications until later in the school year when its current students have given an indication to the school authorities of their intention to return to the school in the forthcoming academic year.

Application Forms are available from the school office on request.

Please also note that 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.

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

The board of St. Fintan's High 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 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

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:

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

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.

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. Fintan's High School, the allocated time on the timetable for Religious Education responds to this. 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, St. Fintan's High School 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.

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 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.