

## **Admission Policy of St. Vincent's[A1] Secondary School**

**Glasnevin Dublin 11**

**Roll number: 60400f**

**School Patron: Edmund Rice School 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 [date]. 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. Vincent's Secondary 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.

[A3]

## **2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

St. Vincent's Secondary 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. Vincent's Secondary 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

St. Vincent's is informed by the ERST Charter which includes the five key elements as guiding principles for this policy:

- **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.**

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values means that in Edmund Rice Secondary School we live our Catholic Faith, experience God, respect the beliefs and values of each member of the school community and work for social and ecological justice.
- Promoting partnership means that in Edmund Rice Secondary School we make everyone feel welcome, build a Christian community with a shared

vision and mission, recognise the voice of staff, students and parents and are involved in our parish.

- Excellence in teaching and learning means that in Edmund Rice Secondary School we have high expectations of our teachers and students, nurture the development of all aspects of our lives, respond to a changing world, use technology responsibly and creatively to enhance our learning and promote learning as a life-long enterprise.
- Creating a caring school community means that in Edmund Rice Secondary School we show care and compassion as exemplified in the life of Jesus, respect and celebrate the dignity of each person, seek to help those who are disadvantaged or in need in society and speak up for those whose voice is not heard.
- Inspiring transformational leadership means that in Edmund Rice Secondary School we motivate people to work towards the vision of Blessed Edmund, inspire the minds and hearts of our students to have courage and confidence to stand up for what we believe in, lead by giving good example and take responsibility for our actions.'

Our mission aims to provide a quality catholic education for all, in the tradition of Edmund Rice, which promotes leadership, fosters community and respects diversity.

The school is managed by a Board of Management, is funded by the Department of Education and Skills and operates within the regulations and guidelines set down by that Department. The school has a very active Parents' Association and a strong Students' Council.

The school aims, with the resources available, to provide the best possible environment in order to cater for the cultural, educational, moral, physical, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions of all students. We show special concern for those experiencing educational inequality and we make every effort to ensure that the uniqueness and dignity of each person is respected, and responded to, especially through the pastoral care system in the school.

Working together as a school community, the Board of Management, parents, staff and students, aim to provide an environment which will allow each student to develop intellectually, physically, morally, socially and spiritually, so as they will be able to fulfill their role in society.

Within the context of the Department of Education and Skills regulations and programmes, the rights of the Trustees/Board of Management as set out in the Education Act 1998 (Section 15 (1), (2)), and the funding and resources available the school supports the following principles:

- Ø Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs
- Ø Equality with respect to maximum access and participation in the school
- Ø Parental choice in relation to choice of school, having regard for the characteristic spirit of the school
- Ø Respect for the diversity of beliefs, languages, traditions and ways of life in society

St. Vincent's Admissions Policy welcomes all students for whom the school can provide an appropriate education. The school aims to provide an integrated and an inclusive education.

### **3. Admission Statement**

St. Vincent's Secondary 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.

### **Single gender schools**

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

### **Post-primary denominational schools**

St. Vincent's Secondary 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 Roman Catholic faith in preference to others.

### **All denominational schools**

St. Vincent's Secondary 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 Roman 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:**

Not applicable[A5]

## **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

S[A6] t. Vincents Secondary 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. Vincent's 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 already in the school
2. Brothers of past pupils
3. Sons of past pupils up to a maximum of 25% of places
4. Sons of members of teaching staff of St. Vincent's, who have at least 3 years service in the school at the closing date for receipt of applications as specified in the annual admission notice'
5. Boys from St Vincent's primary school.
6. Any remaining places will be offered on a randomly selected basis by public lottery (see below).

Students who apply after the closing date will be placed on the waiting list in order of the date on which they apply and after any applicant on the list from the lottery draw.

A boy placed on the waiting list is not in any way guaranteed a place in the school.

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:

A waiting list will be established through a public lottery.

The public lottery will be conducted in the following manner:

All names will be placed in a drum.

Places or position on the waiting list will be determined by the order of draw.

It will take place in the school at a time and date which will be communicated to the persons involved.

An independent arbitrator (e.g. Garda, priest etc) will supervise and sign off the draw for fairness and transparency.

## **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 or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;

a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;[A8] other than, (1) brothers of a student attending or having attended the school and (2) parents of a student having attended the school.

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

(f)

- (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. Vincent's[A9] Secondary 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 [A10] 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. Vincent's Secondary 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. Vincents Secondary 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.

## **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 data 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. Vincent's [A11] 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. Vincent's [A12] 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: **TRANSFER OF A STUDENT FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL.**

## **GENERAL**

The school will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer to our school.

### **Application Process**

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

The Board of Management will decide whether or not a transfer:

- Ø Is in agreement with School Admission Policy
- Ø Is in the best interest of the student
- Ø Is in the best interest of the school
- Ø Is of educational benefit to the student

All relevant information from the former school must be made available. A consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer may be necessary.

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, the education welfare officer, whether such a place may be offered, immediately, or whether it would be better to wait until the beginning of the next academic year.

All such applications will be considered on an individual basis, subject to the availability of a place at the time of application. Application Forms are available from the school office on request. A copy of this Admissions Policy will accompany each application form.

Applicants must meet the school's entry criteria, and furnish a full and honest reason for seeking a placement St. Vincent's.

Applicants for a place in the school at any time other than from the following 1<sup>st</sup> September who are at the time of application enrolled in another second level school will not be enrolled in St Vincent's . This provision will not apply to applicants relocating to North Dublin from outside of Dublin.

Applicants who have been expelled/permanently excluded from a school, or for whom a process has begun which may lead to expulsion/permanent exclusion, will be required to make full disclosure of the circumstances leading to their expulsion or possible expulsion. Applications from such applicants will be considered by the board of management only when it is satisfied that there has been full disclosure.

In the event of a section 29 appeal taking place regarding the applicants expulsion, the Board of Management will not consider the application till the

appeal process has been completed. The board will then decide on the application and will not enrol an applicant where the board concludes that to enrol him would pose a risk to the safety and wellbeing of other students or school staff.

Applicants must complete the application form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will be returned to Parents/Guardians. Parents/Guardians should sign the application form and date it. Parents/Guardians are required to provide an emergency contact phone number.

Applicants will be required to furnish details about their prior second-level education including copies of their last two school reports that set out the actual results of in-house examinations. Where an applicant has attended more than one second-level school they may be required, at the discretion of the Board, to submit reports from each school. Where appropriate applicants may be required to submit copies of the results of any state examinations which they have sat.

Applicants are required to submit a reference from their previous school(s). Applicants may be required to complete a further information form regarding their child's educational progress at a later date. Where the school considers it to be necessary the school may require an applicant to provide a current education psychological assessment report. Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation listed above, within a reasonable timeframe, or to supply any other relevant documentation requested by the school may result in an applicant being refused admission to the school

**Decision Making Process:** Decisions regarding admissions are a matter for the Board of Management. However, this task is normally delegated to the Principal who decides on such matters in accordance with the school's admission policy.

Admissions for any school year will be considered as soon as possible after the application is received. 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 school academic year. This will certainly be so in the case of applications for senior cycle courses, as the school may not yet have begun to survey its own students about their preferences for senior cycle.

A decision will be made in respect of each application following the timing above and the selection criteria set out below and is subject to the class size limitations imposed by the Board of Management for different subject areas and the capacity of the school to provide the academic subjects sought by the student at an appropriate level i.e. higher/lower.

**Enrolment Criteria:** Applicants must meet any criteria laid down by the Department of Education and Skills where available e.g. applicants must not have already spent six years at second-level or apply for a course which would necessarily result in their spending longer than six years at second level.

All students entering the school must supply an original Birth Certificate (returnable to the parent/guardian), a copy of which will be retained on school file/records or other appropriate identification as determined by the school.

The behaviour /disciplinary record of a student in their previous school (s) shall be an important factor. The school reserves the right to refuse to admit a student whose behaviour in their previous school has been deemed unsatisfactory, or is a cause for health and safety concerns or where there has not been a satisfactory level of co-operation between the previous school and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall also be an important factor.

The availability of suitable places in any given year group shall be of paramount importance and shall be one of the determining factors of admission.

x[A13] 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:

Applicants for a place in the school at any time other than from the following 1<sup>st</sup> September who are at the time of application enrolled in another second level school will not be enrolled in St Vincent's . This provision will not apply to applicants relocating to North Dublin from outside of Dublin.

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

The board of St Vincent's Secondary School or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, 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. Vincents 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. Vincents places great importance on the religious or spiritual formation of all its students. Each student has his/her 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.

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.