

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School, Shannon, Co. Clare

Admissions Policy

Introduction

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School is a co-educational second level school under the joint Trusteeship of the Bishop of Killaloe and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. The school aims, with the resources available, to provide an environment which will allow each student to develop intellectually, physically, morally, socially and spiritually.

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School supports the principles of inclusiveness, equality of access and the rights of parents/guardians to send their children to a school of their choice. We also respect the diversity of traditions, values, languages and ways of life in modern Irish society.

This policy has been formulated by the Board of Management having consulted with all relevant stakeholders and in accordance with the provisions of the following legislation: The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Equal Status Act (2000) and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004).

General Criteria for Admission to St. Patrick's Comprehensive School:

- Return of a fully completed student enrolment form or application to transfer form. Application forms must be accompanied by all educational, psychological, medical, school and behavioural reports and assessments relevant to the individual applicant as well as a copy of his/her Birth Certificate.
- Acceptance of the Code of Behaviour and all other relevant St. Patrick's Comprehensive School policies.
- Ability of the school to meet the educational and other needs of the applicant. Students with special educational needs will be educated in an inclusive environment with students who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the student is such that to do so would be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the student as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under the Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 or (b) the effective provision of education for students with whom the student is to be educated.

Special Educational Needs

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School welcomes pupils with special educational needs and will use the financial and personnel resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable accommodation for all such students. It will endeavour to ensure that these students are free to participate in the life of the school in so far as is reasonably practicable. In line with the Special Educational Needs Policy, the school will liaise with feeder schools in order to access information relevant to providing for the needs of students with special educational needs.

It is expected of all parents that they will facilitate the provision for special educational needs where the school authorities deem it to be necessary.

Application Procedures

First Years

Each year an Open Night will be held in October, the details of which will be communicated to students in all feeder primary schools and also advertised in local media.

Students must have reached 12 years of age by the 1st of January of the year of entry or the year preceding entry and reached an educational standard of sixth class primary school level.

Completed applications, with required documentation, must be lodged in the School Office by the advertised closing date in order to be processed as required. Confirmation of enrolment shall be issued within 21 days of closing date.

There are 140 First Year places available each year and these are allocated on a first come first served basis.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission to First Year. Parents/Guardians of pupils who are refused admission will be advised of their right to appeal and be given information on how to do so.

Autism Classes (ASD Unit)

Application will only be considered in the year of entry and all applications must be accompanied by an assessment carried out by an Educational/Clinical Psychologist, approved by the Department of Education and Skills, recommending the candidate as eligible for consideration for entry to an Autism Spectrum Disorder Class.

Following receipt of a fully completed application form, supported by all required documentation, applications will be considered in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Organiser for the area.

The following criteria will apply in allocating places to the two Autism classes:

- Availability of places. The number of places in the ASD unit is limited to 12 at any one time.
- Ability to meet the student's needs within the class.
- Recommendations of the Special Educational Needs Organiser.

The placement of each student will be subject to regular review by school staff and, where relevant, professionals external to the school.

Students with ASD will be educated in an inclusive environment with students who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the student is such that to do so would be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the student as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under the Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 or (b) the effective provision of education for students with whom the student is to be educated.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission to the ASD unit. Parents/Guardians of pupils who are refused admission will be advised of their right to appeal and given information on how to do so.

Leaving Certificate Applied Programme

This is a programme which can be taken instead of the conventional Leaving Certificate. It has a practical emphasis and is aimed at students who find it difficult to access the type of learning and academic requirements on offer in the traditional Leaving Certificate Programme. All students wishing to follow the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme must complete an application form issued after students and their parents or guardians have been fully informed about all senior cycle options at an in school information evening.

All students are required to attend for interview in order to ensure that they fully understand what is involved in the programme and to ascertain their suitability for the course. A commitment to the attendance requirement, work experience and the meeting of deadlines for tasks and module assignments is crucial.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission to the LCA programme. Parents/Guardians of pupils who are refused admission will be advised of their right to appeal and be given information on how to do so.

All Leaving Certificate Applied students engage in Work Experience one day per week. It is a student's responsibility to find his/her own work experience.

Transition Year Programme

This is a one-year programme offered to students on completion of the Junior Certificate Programme. The programme is optional. All students wishing to follow the TY Programme must complete an application form issued after students and their parents or guardians have been fully informed about all senior cycle options at an in school information evening. All students are required to attend for interview in order to ensure that they fully understand what is involved in the programme and to ascertain their suitability for the course.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for admission to the TY programme. Parents/Guardians of pupils who are refused admission will be advised of their right to appeal and be given information on how to do so.

All Transition year students engage in two weeks of Work Experience during the year. It is a student's responsibility to find his/her own work experience.

Students transferring from another school

An application to transfer is defined as one from a student who has previously enrolled in another post-primary school and seeks to enrol in St. Patrick's Comprehensive School prior to the start of the school year.

The following considerations and procedures will apply:

- Student's applying for transfer from another school must submit a fully completed application form. This form must be accompanied by copies of the student's two most recent school reports and copies of any assessments (educational psychological).
- The effect of the transfer on the student and his/her best interest.
- The effect of the transfer on the order, discipline and educational welfare of existing students.
- Availability of space in the curricular programme sought by the applicant.
- Availability of the applicant's chosen subjects.
- Consultation with the Education Welfare Officer if appropriate.

- The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application which includes an established prior record of poor behaviour.

Repeating the Leaving Certificate/Repeating a year

Students who wish to apply to repeat the Leaving Certificate must do so by completing the appropriate application form available from the office. In the event of applications exceeding the number of places available preference will be given to students of St. Patrick's Comprehensive School.

Parents/Guardians of students of St. Patrick's Comprehensive School who wish to repeat a particular school year must apply in writing to the school Principal.

PLC Programmes

Applicants are required to submit a fully completed application form accompanied by the appropriate fee. All applicants are required to attend for interview in order to ensure that they fully understand what is involved in the programme and to ascertain their suitability for the course.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for admission to a PLC programme. Applicants who are refused admission will be advised of their right to appeal and be given information on how to do so.

Monitoring and Review of Policy

This Admissions Policy which was drawn up in consultation with the staff, students, parents and management of our school and was ratified by the Board of Management will be reviewed one year after its implementation initially.

Any amendments which need to be made will be in keeping with the general philosophy of the policy and will be communicated to the members of the school community in writing.

A major review will be carried out no later than five years after the date of implementation and will involve consultation with the parents, students, staff, management and Board of Management of our school.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 30/01/18

David Deighan,
Chairperson, Board of Management.