



# St. Raphael's College

## Admission Policy

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY (as revised October 2017)**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

St. Raphael's College is a Catholic, co-educational voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools Trust). The policy is informed by the CEIST Charter and the core elements of this charter are:

1. Promoting Spiritual and Human Development
2. Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning
3. Showing respect for every Person, irrespective of their religious affiliations or cultural differences.
4. Creating Community
5. Being Just and Responsible

Our policy is to enhance the educational growth of our students in their intellectual, spiritual, social, artistic, moral and sporting development. The policy is implemented within the context of our Mission Statement:

*"St Raphael's College is a Catholic, co-educational school which aims to provide a Christian education designed to help each pupil reach his/her full potential. Administrators and teachers see themselves as supporting the parents who are the primary educators of their children."*

Students with special needs are catered for insofar as school resources, supported by the Department of Education and Skills, will allow. The College has a special class which caters for students with physical disabilities and has a maximum number of 8 students. Access to this unit requires appropriate certification to satisfy the requirements of the National Council for Special Education ([www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)).

#### **SCOPE**

This policy operates in respect of admissions to the school in the following circumstances:

- Students applying for a place in First Year
- Students from outside of the school applying for a place in any other year group or programme
- Students applying to repeat any year of any programme within the school, including repeating the Leaving Certificate
- Students from within the school applying for a place in the Transition Year (TY) or Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) programmes.

#### **RATIONALE**

This policy aims to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school....

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the College to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it.

#### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The Board of Management of St. Raphael's College supports the principles of inclusivity; equality of access, participation and provision; parental choice in relation to enrolment; respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, culture and way of life.

The operating framework of the Admissions Policy is administered in the context of the regulatory, legal and financial parameters of:

- The Education Act 1998, Section 15.2(d)
- The regulations of the Department of Education and Skills
- The rights of Trustees as set out in the Education Act, 1998
- The CEIST Charter
- The Articles of Management of Catholic Secondary Schools
- The regulations and the prescribed curricular programmes of the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act, 1998.
- The funding and resources available to the school at any given time. The financial and teaching resources of the school are provided by a combination of grants and teacher allocations from the Department of Education and Skills, voluntary contributions (requested from parents each year) and occasional fundraising.
- Implementation of the School plan and school policy having due regard to the resources and funding available

This policy is also compliant with relevant sections of the:

- Education Welfare Act 2000
- Equal Status Act 2000
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007
- Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003

## **PROCEDURES RELATING TO ADMISSION INTO FIRST YEAR**

1. Application forms are available from the school office on request, on Open Night or from Principal during visits to feeder schools.
2. The annual Open Night will provide information to parents/guardians and aspirant applicants on the application process, the Admission Policy and the ethos of the school. Parents will have an opportunity to have their queries answered.
3. Prospective students must be aged 12 or over on Jan 1st of the calendar year following the child's entry into First Year and must supply an original Birth Certificate as identification.
3. Application Forms must be returned to St. Raphael's College before the due date. This date will be confirmed to parents on Open Night, and all applications will be acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt.
4. The earliest date on which applications become live is the first school day after the published due date.
5. The offer of a place is subject to satisfying the Admissions Policy.
6. Details and copies of any assessments in relation to the student's educational, psychological or health carried out in the past, must be supplied to the College when an application for enrolment is made.
7. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application within 21 school days after the closing date for completed application forms.
8. Late applications will be kept on file and considered only when all applicants who applied on time have been considered. If the maximum enrolment number as decided by the Board of Management is reached, then these names will be placed on a waiting list if requested to do so by the parent/guardian.
9. On receipt of an offer of a place, parents/guardians must secure that place by completing and returning the Acceptance Form which accompanies the offer. This Acceptance Form must be received in the College office on/before the date indicated on the letter offering a place. Failure to return the completed Acceptance Form by this date will result in the offer deemed to have been not accepted, and you no longer wish to enrol your son/daughter in the College. The place will then be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.  
The College cannot be held responsible for items lost in the postal system, and proof of postage is advised.
10. All students who have accepted a place in St. Raphael's will be required to sit a Transition Assessment test. The results of the assessment test are not part of the admission criteria. Instead, the test provides the school with information to ensure that appropriate supports are in place for all students.
11. Misleading or inaccurate information may result in disqualification of the applicant.
12. The Principal, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000, will make available a copy of the Code of Behaviour to parents/guardians before registering the child as a student of the College. All incoming students and their parents/guardians are expected to sign a copy of the Application for Enrolment form, indicating acceptance of the College's Code of Behaviour, before admission.
13. Acceptance of the offer of a place in the College and returning the Acceptance Form, duly signed, will be taken to mean that the parent/guardian has read the said Code of Behaviour and that they agree to encourage and assist their child, as far as practicable, to abide by the said Code for the duration of their attendance in St. Raphael's College, and will not do, or fail to do anything that will be likely to bring the school into disrepute.
14. Parents are required to cooperate with the school's attempts to identify the educational or other relevant needs of the child by permitting the College to discuss their child's educational records with the feeder primary school.

15. The Board of Management will set a figure each year for the number of students to be accepted into First Year. This figure will depend on the overall number of students in the school and the overall capacity for which the school can cater, and is contingent on the provision of the necessary accommodation and resources by the Department of Education.

15. The Parents Association plays an important role in support of the College. All parents/guardians of St. Raphael's College are automatically members of the Parents' Association and are encouraged to become actively involved in it.

### **CRITERIA FOR ENROLMENT**

- If the College is over-subscribed for First Year in September 2018, the following criteria will be applied in selecting applicants, in the following order:
  1. Siblings of present students
  2. Siblings of past students who completed their 2nd Level education in St. Raphael's College
  3. Children of College staff employed in the College at time of enrolment
  4. Children of past pupils
  5. Students from within the traditional catchment area who are attending the feeder Primary schools (List of feeder schools in Appendix 1)
    - The Principal will verify a student's right to a place using all means available and necessary, including the use of past student records and contacting the feeder Primary schools
    - By making an application for enrolment, parents/guardians give permission to the College to contact feeder Primary schools to verify information provided.
    - All contacts or lobbying of College personnel or members of the Board of Management regarding enrolment will disqualify a student's application
- If there is still a surplus, having implemented the above criteria, a random selection will be conducted for the remaining places will take place in the College. A member of the legal profession, appointed by the Board, will act as independent observer of the process.
- Where siblings have applied, e.g. twins, triplets etc., they will be treated as a single entity for the purposes of the lottery. This means they all get a place or none of them is offered a place.
- Where it is considered necessary by the College, an applicant may be required to complete a further information form regarding their child's educational progress and/or to provide a current education psychological assessment report.
- Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation listed above or to supply any other relevant documentation requested by the College may result in an applicant being refused admission to the College.

### **PRODECURES RELATING TO ADMISSION TO A YEAR OTHER THAN FIRST YEAR**

1. Applicants should complete the application form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians.
2. Applicants will be required to provide details about the second-level education in their previous School(s) including copies of their two most recent School reports which set out the results of in-house examinations.
3. Where an applicant has attended more than one second-level School they will be required, at the discretion of the Board, to submit reports from each School and copies of the results of any State Examinations.
4. Where it is considered necessary by the College, an applicant may be required to complete a further information form regarding their child's educational progress and/or to provide a current education psychological assessment report. Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation listed above or to supply any other relevant documentation requested by the College may result in an applicant being refused admission to the Year.

### **Enrolment criteria**

1. Applicants must meet criteria laid down by the Department of Education & Skills
2. The applicant and his/her parents/guardians must agree, in writing, to allow the Principal to seek all records relating to the applicant from his previous School(s).
3. Enrolment is subject to the applicant's subject choices being available (on the curriculum, and not exceeding maximum class size).
4. All students entering the College must supply an original Birth Certificate or other appropriate identification.

### **PROCEDURES RELATING TO ADMISSION TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES, SUBJECTS OR SUBJECT LEVEL**

- If the demand for a specific programme, subject or subject level exceeds the number of places available then the College will make every effort, within the constraints of teaching resources to accommodate the student. Where it is not possible to accommodate all applicants, then priority will be given to students from within the College and to those who have completed all application forms on time.

- Students must have demonstrated acceptable standards of behaviour and attitude while in Junior Cycle years. When there is a question over the re-enrolment of a student into Senior Cycle, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management.

## SUMMARY

- 1. Entry to Transition Year (TY)** Entry to Transition Year is not automatic and the process is contained in a separate Transition Year Policy available from the school office.
- 2. Entry to Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)** requires students to have a particular combination of subjects, as laid down by the Department of Education & Skills.
- 3. Entry to specific subjects** will be determined by the subject choice process, where students indicate their preferred options and the College allocates classes. Subjects will only be offered if there are a minimum number of applicants for it. In normal circumstances this will be a minimum of 10 students but exceptions may be made e.g. where the College is trying to promote a new subject. Other criteria to be used includes:
  - The student's previous performance at that subject relative to the other applicants
  - Their results in State Examinations where available will also be considered
  - Where this does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the College may survey the student's previous teacher(s) about their suitability for the subject or alternative subjects and the College may also take into account the availability of other suitable subjects available to competing applicants.
- 4. Entry to specific subject levels** will be determined by the student's previous performance in that subject relative to the other applicants; their results in State examinations, where available, will also be considered.
- 5. Admission to repeat a year:** All such applications are subject to the Department of Education & Skills Circular M2/95. Applications will be considered in the light of the class size and overall enrolment restrictions set out elsewhere in this policy. Applications must be in writing and must state the relevant Circular and the particular clause(s) being invoked in support of the application and must be accompanied by supporting documentation, as appropriate. The College must be satisfied that the applicant, in light of the special circumstances that gave rise to the application and in the context of the student's previous academic record, application to studies, conduct etc., applied him/herself to the best of their ability.
- 6. Admission to repeat the Leaving Cert Programme:** The College does not operate a specific Repeat Leaving Certificate Programme. It does not provide any additional teaching to cover material normally covered in the Leaving Certificate Programme. Students who apply to repeat the Leaving Certificate will be considered in the context of places available in the relevant subjects, the overall programme and overall enrolment within the College and in the context of the student's previous academic record, application to studies, conduct etc.
- 7. Entry into classes up the College:** This refers to places that may be offered if and when vacancies become available in all classes from Junior Cert Year 1 to Leaving Cert Year 2. There is no obligation on the Board of Management to fill any or every vacancy which may arise. The Principal will process the allocation of place(s) and, refusal enrol may be appealed to the Board.
- 8. Students with Special Education Needs:** St. Raphael's College, as a mainstream inclusive school, is committed to the provision of quality education to all students. To achieve this aim, parents/guardians are requested to engage with the College's Special Education Needs Co-ordinator and provide all available previous educational records and assessments; this will enable the Co-ordinator to apply to the Department of Education and Skills for any additional resources and supports that may be required for the student.

## DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REGARDING ENTRY TO FIRST YEAR, OTHER YEAR GROUPS AND SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES AND SUBJECTS

This is a matter for the Board of Management but is normally delegated to the Principal, who decides on such matters in accordance with the College's general policies. The Principal may refer any application to the Board for review and decision.

## RIGHT OF REFUSAL

The BOM reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases.

Such an exceptional case could include the following:

1. The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the College cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
2. If the student has been permanently excluded from another school
3. If in the opinion of the Board of Management, enrolling a student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to College staff or to College property, or the student's behaviour has been seriously detrimental to the Health and Safety of others or is likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the College.
4. Ultimately, the right to refuse admission is a matter for the Board of Management, who must balance the rights of the individual alongside the rights of the College community in line with legislation.

## RIGHT OF APPEAL

Where a student is refused admission to the College or to a specific programme within the College, they have the right to appeal this decision to the Board of Management. This appeal must be furnished within 21 days of the refusal to enrol.

The decision of the board will be made within 21 further days.

In the event of the appeal to the Board of Management being unsuccessful, an appeal may be made by the parent/guardian, by a student (if aged over 18), or by Tusla under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007), to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills within 42 days of the result of the decision by the Board of Management.

## OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

All College policies, including this Admissions Policy and the Code of Behaviour Policy, are available from the school.

## PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

The College relies on parents/guardians to provide it with accurate and complete information and to update us in writing with any changes in the information already provided. Unless and until we are otherwise informed in writing, all correspondence in relation to your child will be sent to the address indicated on the enrolment form.

In the case of parents who have separated, and where the College has been notified of same, the College will arrange for both parties to receive correspondence in relation to the child, if requested to do so in writing. The Principal will also try to facilitate involvement by both parties in parent-teacher meetings.

## DATA PROTECTION

- The College is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. Personal data supplied on the enrolment form will be used for the purposes on student enrolment, registration – including the October Returns to the Department of Education & Skills, administration, child welfare, the College texting service for parents/guardians and to fulfil any other legal obligations.
- While the information provided will be treated as confidential to the College, from time to time it may be necessary for us to exchange personal data on a confidential basis with other bodies including the Department of Education & Skills, the Department of Social Protection, An Garda Síochána, the Health Services Executive and Tusla.
- Should a parent or student wish to update or access their personal data, they should write to the Principal.

## REVIEW AND EVALUATION

- The implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of this policy will be a matter for the Board of management in conjunction with the Principal.
- **The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017.**  
The next review is due in June 2018. The Principal is responsible for initiating the review.
- **The Board of Management has fixed the intake of new First Years at 120 for Academic year commencing September 2018.**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of St. Raphael's College on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson BoM

Date \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

## APPENDIX 1

### Feeder schools

St Ita's NS., Loughrea

St.Brendan's NS., Loughrea

Gaelscoil Riabhach, Loughrea

Ballymana NS

Bullaun NS

Bracloon NS

Cappatagle NS

Craughwell NS

Carrabane NS

Duniry NS

Kilcooley NS

Kilricle NS

Kiltulla NS

Kilnadeema NS

Kilchreest NS

Leitrim NS

Mullagh NS