



ADMISSION POLICY OF ST RAPHAEL'S COLLEGE

SCHOOL ADDRESS: LOUGHREA, CO. GALWAY

ROLL NUMBER: 63070C

SCHOOL PATRON: CEIST

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 September 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. Raphael's College 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 St. Raphael's College.

St. Raphael's College is a Catholic co-educational voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust).

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of St. Raphael's College 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.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church which aims to promote:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, 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 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.

Catholic education is therefore a lifelong process of human growth and development which has been at the heart of the Church's mission since Jesus Christ urged his disciples to 'go teach all nations'. The person of Christ is the core of Catholic education.

St. Raphael's College draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past, interpreted and lived out for students living in today's world. The charism of founder, Catherine McAuley of The Mercy Sisters who began this school is of very significant importance in the life of the school.

As a CEIST school, St. Raphael's College values teaching as one of the most important of all human activities. Our school seeks to build a quality learning community that welcomes, and bears witness to the Gospel values of

Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the CEIST Charter. These are encapsulated in the core values which are intended to support and nourish the lives of the people who are at the heart of our schools.

- ***Promoting Spiritual and Human Development***
- ***Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning***
- ***Showing Respect for Every Person***
- ***Creating Community***
- ***Being Just and Responsible***

St. Raphael's College is inspired by the words of Jesus Christ to his disciples, "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10). Because of this, St. Raphael's College provides a rich, holistic education in the Catholic tradition where engagement with and development of the whole person; the intellectual, moral, religious, physical, spiritual and psychological are at the core of our practice.

Education has as its goal the formation of a human person who is free, rational and mature in relationships. St. Raphael's College offers educational opportunities which promote excellence so that students can respond responsibly and creatively to their own lives, the lives of others and to the earth, which is our common home.

In St. Raphael's College, the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God is acknowledged and affirmed. The Catholic school is an inclusive community, ideally built on love and formed by the interaction and collaboration of its various components: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and members of the Board of Management. Catholic schools are also outward looking. They are connected to their local parish and Diocese and other local organisations which enrich the life of the school. Our school draws on the rich resources of the local community and, in turn, contributes to the life of the local community.

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is central to our curriculum. Alongside Religious Education, the school supports the formation in faith of our students through many school-based experiences of prayer and ritual. All students' spiritual growth is further enhanced through such areas as sport, language, nature, art, poetry and music.

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 educational 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).

3. Admission Statement

St. Raphael's College 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.

Post-primary denominational schools

St. Raphael's College 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 Roman Catholic denomination in preference to others.

All denominational schools

St. Raphael's College 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 Roman Catholic denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Schools with special education class(es), include

St. Raphael's College which has established a Special Education class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

St. Raphael's College, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with physical disabilities.

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

All denominational schools

St. Raphael's College is a Catholic school under the trusteeship of CEIST and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic denomination

where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

School with special education class(es)

The special class attached to St. Raphael's College provides an education exclusively for students with physical disabilities and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

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 FOR ENROLMENT

- If the College is over-subscribed for First Year in September 2021, 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 (Up to a maximum of 25% of total intake)
 5. Students who are attending the feeder Primary schools (List of feeder schools in Appendix 1)
 6. All other applicants

- 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

- 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.
- Late applications will only be considered if there are places available. If there are no places available, late applicants will be placed at the end of any existing waiting list.
- Completed application forms must be returned on or before the appointed closing date.
- Acceptance of places must be confirmed on or before the appointed closing date.

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:

- If there is still a surplus, having implemented the above criteria, a random selection will be conducted for the remaining places which 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.

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;

- (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; (Except in the case of over-subscription as described in section 6)
- (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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Raphael's College 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 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) 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 17](#) below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Raphael's College, 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

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. Raphael's College, 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. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students 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 student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social 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 students whose applications for admission to St. Raphael's College 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. Raphael's College 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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

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 may be asked to produce evidence of academic records from other schools. This will be at the discretion of the parents/guardians.
3. Applicants who have attended more than one previous school may be asked to provide evidence of academic records. This will be at the discretion of the parents/guardians.
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.

Enrolment criteria

1. Applicants must meet criteria laid down by the Department of Education & Skills
2. The applicant and his/her parents/guardians may be asked to allow the Principal to seek all records relating to the applicant from his previous School(s). This will be at the parents/guardians discretion.

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.

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;

1. Requirements for enrolment to 1st year apply
2. The Board of Management of St. Raphael's College reserves the right to refuse enrolment if the school's capacity has been reached or exceeded.
3. A written application must be requested and returned.

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

The board of St. Raphael's College or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education Act 1998, 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 opting out of Religious Instruction

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend St. Raphael's College without attending religious instruction 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 how that request may be accommodated by the school.

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)

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.

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 September 2022**
- The next review is due in September 2023
The Principal is responsible for initiating the review.
- **The Board of Management has set the intake of new First Years for Academic year commencing September 2023, at 130.**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of
St. Raphael's College on

Adrian Connaire, Chairperson,
Date: September

Paul Cafferky, Principal/Secretary
Date: September

APPENDIX 1

Traditional Feeder schools

St Ita's NS., Loughrea

Duniry NS

St. Brendan's NS., Loughrea

Kilcooley NS

Gaelscoil Riabhach, Loughrea

Kilrickle NS

Ballymana NS

Kiltulla NS

Bullaun NS

Kilnadeema NS

Brackloon NS

Kilchreest NS

Carrabane N.S.

Leitrim NS

Mullagh NS