



## **Admission Policy of St Joseph's Fairview**

**Merville Avenue, Fairview, Dublin 3**

**Roll number: 60390F**

**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 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022. 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 Joseph's Fairview 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 Joseph's Fairview is a newly designated co-educational Catholic voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. From the academic year 2022/23, the school will accept both girls and boys into the incoming 1<sup>st</sup> year cohorts.

'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 Joseph's Fairview 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. Joseph's is dedicated to maintaining the spiritual values of the founder, Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice. We seek to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values means that in St. Joseph's 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 St. Joseph's we make everyone feel welcome, build a Christian community with a shared vision and mission, recognize the voice of staff, students, parents, trustees and past pupils and seek to build and maintain strong links with our parish. Our home school liaison officer, shared with the primary school, is pivotal in bringing together all the elements of our school community. Students organise a Christmas party in conjunction with St Vincent De Paul for the elderly in the area each Christmas.
- Excelling in teaching and learning means that in St. Joseph's 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 lifelong enterprise, in an atmosphere of care and compassion. Participating in P-Tech outlines the school's commitment to educating our students to meet the demands of 21st Century technological advances.
- Creating a caring school community means that in St. Joseph's 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 the weak and vulnerable and for those whose voice is not heard. Our inclusive programme provides language support, supervised after school study, breakfast club. Personal counselling is available to all. Year heads provide both pastoral and practical support to our students. Every two years our Transition and Fifth year students take part in the Edmund Rice Schools Trust World Immersion Programme in Kabwe, Zambia where we have established links with Sables Nua, a school for over 200 orphaned and street children
- Inspiring transformational leadership means that in St. Joseph's 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. Big brother/sister mentoring allows senior students to support 1st Year students.

### 3. Admission Statement

St Joseph's Fairview 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 Joseph's Fairview 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 Joseph's Fairview 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.

St Joseph's Fairview is a school which has established a 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 Joseph's Fairview, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with ASD.

#### **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 Joseph's Fairview 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.

The special class attached to St Joseph's Fairview provides an education exclusively for students with ASD 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 (as outlined in Section 4).

#### **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:

Applications will be processed in the following sequence and places filled from each category in order until the number of available places is filled:

1. Students from St. Joseph's Primary School, Fairview
2. A boy or a girl whose legal sibling is registered as a student in St. Joseph's on the closing date for applications
3. A brother or sister of a past pupil of St. Joseph's
3. Sons/daughters or grandchildren of past pupils up to a maximum of 25% of the total places available as specified in the annual admission notice
4. All other applicants by lottery for the relevant school year

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), a lottery will apply in allocating places within that category.

The lottery will be supervised by:

- a nominee of the Board of Management who is not a member of the Board of Management
- the Principal and Deputy Principal

All applicants within the category will have their names entered for the lottery and names will be drawn until all places are filled. Twins and triplets will be treated as a single application, although both names or all 3 names will be entered in the lottery. If the name of one is drawn, the others will automatically be allocated places.

When all places are filled, names of applicants in this category will continue to be drawn to establish the order of applicants on the waiting list see section 13.

## **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) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to:
  - admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned and/or
- (c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (d) a requirement that a student, or his parents, attend an interview, open day or other

meeting as a condition of admission;

- (e) 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) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents 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) 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 Joseph's Fairview 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 18](#) below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St Joseph's Fairview, 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. Joseph's 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.
- (v) 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. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school

## **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 Joseph's Fairview 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 Joseph's Fairview 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**

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. Joseph'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 Joseph's. This provision will not apply to applicants relocating to North 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 Principal on behalf of 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 Principal on behalf of the Board of Management will not consider the application till the appeal process has been completed. The Principal on behalf of the Board will then decide on the application and will not enrol an applicant where the Principal 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 Principal 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 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 Principal on behalf of 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.

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 Joseph's . This provision will not apply to applicants relocating to North Dublin.

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

The board of St Joseph's Fairview 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 Joseph's Fairview 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 Joseph's Fairview 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.

## Appendix 1

### Applications for places in the special classes

Applicants for the special class at St. Joseph's must have an ASD professional's report which clearly specifies a diagnosis of Autism. The diagnosis must be determined by the DSM V, ICD 10 criteria, Gillberg and Gillberg's (1989) or other recognised diagnostic tool acceptable to the ASD Admissions Panel team. The ASD professional's report must have been completed with a second level mainstream setting in mind and must specifically recommend a special class attached to a mainstream school, secondary school placement.

The applicant should also furnish the school with the following relevant documentation where applicable/possible:

1. A Clinical Diagnostic report
2. A cognitive assessment which includes an estimation of Cognitive Function.
3. A speech and language assessment (within the last two years)
4. An occupational therapy assessment (within the last two years)
5. A social worker assessment outlining the family's needs, strengths and resources.
6. All reports and information from any support services involved with the student.

If necessary, applicants may be asked to supply further information including any additional documentation relevant to the student's needs which would have an impact on educational planning. The applicant must have supporting documentation that specifies that the student has the adaptive skills to learn and successfully negotiate school life in a special class attached to a mainstream environment. The applicant should have accessed mainstream education to a level consistent with that expected of students within an ASD Special Class attached to a mainstream school. In the allocation of places in the ASD Unit, additional criteria provide appropriate care and education for the applicant, taking the Duty of Care of the applicant, other students and the staff into consideration. Staff from St. Joseph's may visit the primary school and may interview the principal and any relevant personnel involved in the pupil's education to that point. They may also meet with the applicant and conduct observations of the student in his/her current educational setting.

Admission is subject to a place being available and resources being sanctioned prior to the admission of the students. Admission is subject to the number of places sanctioned by the Department of Education & Skills. The recommended limit under Health and Safety guidelines is a maximum of six students per class as sanctioned by the DES. Thereafter, a waiting list will apply. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available the ranked criteria in Point 4 above will apply

The number of places available in the ASD special class will be published by the Board of Management in their annual admission notice.

All applications to the ASD Unit will be reviewed by an ASD Admissions Panel which may consist of the following members:

- The Principal of St. Joseph's
- The Deputy Principal of St. Joseph's
- The St. Joseph's SET Co-ordinator and/or one member of the St. Joseph's SET Team

The ASD Admissions Panel reserves the right to appoint other members to the panel as necessary and to seek the advice of external experts if required.

The remit of the panel is:

- To review all applications and documentation relevant to a student applying for a place in the facility.
- To verify the facility's suitability in meeting the needs of the applicant.
- To meet with the applicant and their parents/guardians.
- To make recommendations based on these findings to the St. Joseph's Board of Management.

The ASD Admissions Panel may make a recommendation with regard to an application for enrolment but the final decisions in respect of all enrolments in St. Joseph's are made by the Principal. Decisions of the ASD Admissions Panel may be appealed to the Board of Management. Decisions of the Board of Management may be appealed to Secretary General of the DES.

All placements are subject to review, at any time, at the request of the parent(s) and/or the school. The review will be carried out by the ASD Admissions Panel who may recommend that the child's needs cannot be met by the school and that the child should be enrolled in an alternative educational establishment. There will also be an annual review of places at the end of each academic year.

For applicants who reside outside the catchment area, parents may apply to the NCSE for Special School Transport. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to attend all meetings and reviews pertaining to the child's enrolment. Once a student has been offered a place in the ASD Unit they will be invited to participate in a transition programme. This is essential to ensure the student's smooth transition to their new environment. While every effort will be made to support each and every pupil if a pupil's Autism evolves into a complex educational need that cannot be met within the schools programme an alternative school placement may be sought, this will be organised in communication with the pupils parents, ASD support team & school Special Education Needs Officer (SENO)