

St. Raphaela's Primary School

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Admission Policy

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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 has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with Parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the School Patron Dr. Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin, on 27th July, 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. Raphaela's 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 "Registration of Interest" form is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request from any person who requests it from the school office. Submitting a "Registration of Interest" form to the school does not confer enrolment.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St. Raphaela's Primary School is an all-girls primary school with a Catholic Ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, and the Trusteeship of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Faith, in particular through the charism and pedagogy of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 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, with other people and with the World/Earth; 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,

The school provides Religious Education for the pupils in accordance with the Catholic Faith 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. Raphaela's Primary school shall uphold, and be accountable to the Patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

While the religious education we provide is in accordance with the Christian traditions and practices of the Catholic Church, we respect and acknowledge the diverse beliefs, religions and ways of life of peoples of all faith backgrounds and none. Pupils of different faith backgrounds attend our school, and their beliefs are respected. The Catholic ethos of the school is inclusive and all pupils are equally welcome.

At St. Raphaela's Primary School we aim to create a safe and happy learning community in which the children in our care are given every opportunity to flourish academically, spiritually and morally, in accordance with the spirit of St. Raphaela Mary.

St. Raphaela was the Foundress of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. At her canonization in 1977, Pope Paul VI stated that Raphaela was a heroic model for others because of how she lived the Gospel through her daily life, to bring those around her to a greater understanding of the love of Jesus.

The Handmaids hold at the centre of their educational mission a commitment to the development of the whole person within a school environment that welcomes diversity while providing consistency of support and love for each child as an individual with unique potential. Handmaid schools promote all aspects of reparation: reconciling, healing, uniting, creating, and encourage our pupils to live a life that brings hope and love to others. Our aim is to encourage the development of children that are strong as well as caring; creative and generous in their talents; secure in themselves and their faith and sensitive to the needs of others; and aware of their potential to bring change to the world around them.

3. Admission Statement

St Raphaela's Primary School is a mainstream school serving girls from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, we currently enrol two classes at each class level.

St. Raphaela's Primary School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) The gender ground of the student or 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. Raphaela’s is an all-girls school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school.

The school is a mainstream primary school with 16 mainstream classrooms and is inclusive in educating pupils with special needs in the mainstream system.

4. Admission of Students

St. Raphaela’s is a Catholic Primary 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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where:

- a) The school is oversubscribed (please see Section 10 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
- c) St. Raphaela’s provides education exclusively for girls and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school

Please see Procedures for Admission to Infants and other class levels in Appendix A

5. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission St. Raphaela’s Primary School will be based on the following:

- a) Our school’s Admission Policy
- b) The school’s Annual Admission Notice
- c) The information provided by the applicant in the school’s official Registration of Interest form received.

Please see Section 12 in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and Section 4.2 above 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.

6. 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 15 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Raphaela's Primary School a Parent/guardian must indicate:

- a) Return the signed enrolment form and requested documents (See Section 4 above)
- b) Parents *must indicate whether or not they have accepted an offer of admission for another school(s)*. If a parent has accepted such an offer, they must provide details of the offer concerned
- c) Parents *must indicate whether or not they have applied for and are awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school(s)*. If so, the parent must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

8. 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.

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:

- An application for admission to the school has been received,
- An offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- An offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- The date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- The date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- The date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- 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).

9. 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. Raphaela's Primary School where—

- a) It is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.

- b) 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.
- c) 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 they accept and undertake to uphold the Code of Behaviour of the school, and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure their child complies with it; or,
- δ) An applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of ‘acceptance of an offer’ as set out in Section 7 above.

10. Procedures in the case of 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:

- i. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and children resident within the Stillorgan / Kilmacud area, (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
Proof of residence (i.e. utility bill/ electoral register) will be sought. Please see Appendix B for the list of roads /estates in Stillorgan / Kilmacud.
- ii. Daughters of staff members (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
- iii. Daughters of past pupils
- iv. Children living outside the Stillorgan / Kilmacud area, by date of birth.

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 oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

11. 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. Raphaela’s were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled.

These applications will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Raphaela’s will be in the order of priority assigned to the students’ applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Applicants whose applications were received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

12. 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 no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available.

In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 11 above. The list remains valid for that school year only.

13. Criteria that will not be considered as part of the admission process

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.
- (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 her Parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission.
- (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 prior to the time 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)

The Board of Management of St. Raphaela's Primary School does not impose the payment of educational fees as a condition of-

- a) Processing registration of interest forms from parents on behalf of their child, or
- b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

14. Arrangements regarding students not engaging with religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the Parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has 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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the Parent(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. Due to staffing and supervision responsibilities, there is no provision within the school for withdrawing a child from the physical space of the child's classroom during timetabled faith development lessons or school assemblies.

15. Reviews/appeals

A parent who has received written communication from the principal to confirm that their child has been refused admission should expect that the communication from the Principal details the reason for refusal.

15.1. Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The Parent of the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission, within ten working days of receiving the communication from the Principal

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.

15.2. 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***

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)

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 a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the Board of Management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an Independent Appeals Committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

16. Ratification:

This policy was reviewed by representatives of the Staff and Parent body before being reviewed by the Board of Management of St. Raphaela's Primary School.

It was submitted to the offices of our school's Patron, Dr. Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of

Dublin for review and ratification on 30th April 2020.

It was returned to the Board and ratified at a Board of Management Meeting on 8th September 2020.

It will come into effect on 9th September 2020.

It will be reviewed as necessary in line with legislative changes.

Signed:

Valerie Scully (Chairperson)

Laura Corry (Principal)

Appendix A: Procedures for Admission

This section contains information relating to:

- i. Procedures for Admission to Junior Infants
- ii. Procedures for Admission to all other classes
- iii. Admission of Children with Special Educational Needs

i. Procedures for Admission to Junior Infants

The Board of Management accepts expressions of interest for enrolment to future Junior Infant Classes up until the closing date published within their Annual Admission Notice in the year prior to the proposed year of entry.

Parents and Guardians seeking a place for their daughter in St. Raphaela's Primary School must fill in a Registration of Interest Form (downloadable from www.straphaelasns.ie or via email from secretary@straphaelasns.ie). This "Registration of Interest" is not an enrolment form, it is an expression of parental interest, **submission of the form does not confer enrolment.**

Given the age profile of our current students, we recommend that Parents / Guardians of applicants should apply for the school year within which their child has attained their 4th birthday before 30th April in the year of their admission.

The Junior Infants Enrolment Procedures are as follows:

1. The School's Annual Admission Notice will be published on the school website at least one week prior to 1st October. It will outline the number of places available and the closing date for receipt of applications.
2. Registration of interest will be invited from prospective Parents/ guardians of pupils e.g. Parents seeking a place for their child in September 2022, will be invited to register their interest before a published closing date in October 2021.
3. On their registration of interest form, parents will be asked to indicate that they have read the Admission Policy made available to them via the School website.
4. The closing date for receipt of registration of interest forms will be stated within the Annual Admission Notice of the relevant year (but this will be a period of not less than three weeks).
5. Offers of a place will be issued in line with the time frame published within the Annual Admission Notice of the relevant year. In the case of oversubscription for a given year, offers will be made in line with Section 10 below.

6. Applicants who are offered a place will then be forwarded an “Enrolment Form” as well as the school’s current Code of Behaviour, via email.

Parents must return the following documents within the timeframe indicated in the offer and the school’s Annual Admission Statement:

- A fully completed hard copy of the Enrolment form
- Signed confirmation of their acceptance and compliance with the school’s Code of Behaviour
- Proof of residence (Utility bill or copy of correspondence from a Government Department)
- A copy of the child’s Birth Certificate.

The Board of Management may also request additional documentation to verify any matter pertaining to the application. The Board of Management reserves the right to verify to its satisfaction any information submitted. False or misleading relevant information on a Registration of Interest form, or Enrolment form, will deem the application invalid.

Parents and pupils who accept a place in the Junior Infant Class for the following school year will be invited to an Induction Day with their daughter during the Summer Term before their September start date.

ii. Procedures for Admission to Senior Infant-Sixth Classes

All applications for admission received for any class from Senior Infants- Sixth Class, inclusive, as outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school’s admission policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school’s intake group are as follows:

- A parent/ guardian will submit a **Registration of Interest** form to the school. This form is not an enrolment form, it is an expression of parental interest.
- Where a place in the class level sought is available, the child will be admitted.
- Where the class level they are seeking is full, Parents / Guardians will be asked if they wish for their child’s name will be added to a wait list for that school year.
- Parents of children who receive and confirm acceptance of the place will then be asked to return:
 - A fully completed hard copy of the Enrolment form
 - Signed confirmation of their acceptance and compliance with the school’s Code of Behaviour
 - Proof of residence (Utility bill or copy of correspondence from a Government Department)
 - A copy of Birth Certificate.

The Board of Management may also request additional documentation to verify any matter pertaining to the application. The Board of Management reserves the right to verify to its satisfaction any information submitted. False or misleading relevant information on a Registration of Interest form, or Enrolment form, will deem the application invalid.

iii. Admission of Children with Special Educational Needs

St. Raphaela's Primary School is a Mainstream Primary School with 16 mainstream classes from Junior Infants- Sixth Class. The Board of Management of St. Raphaela's supports the principle of inclusivity within mainstream classes across all class levels and applications to enrol on behalf of children with disabilities or other special educational needs will be processed as per the school's Admission Policy.

Parents will not be required to share any information on their child's additional / special educational needs until after their daughter has been offered a place in our school and they decide to accept it on her behalf.

Parents who indicate that their child has an additional / special educational need will meet with the school team to establish the educational needs of the child relevant to her disability or special needs, and how the school and family can best prepare for her to join St. Raphaela's.

The school will work together with parents, will guide and inform them of the supports available within a mainstream setting, and any relevant application processes for additional supports that their daughter may require in order to help her thrive in a mainstream classroom alongside her peers. Parents will be asked to forward any assessments or reports relating to the child's educational profile. The school team will refer to these in order to advise parents on applications that could be made to the Department of Education and National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for the provision of supports recommended within the psychological/medical reports. Such additional resources may include, but are not limited to, any combination of the following:

- supplementary teaching from a Special Education Teacher;
- access to a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) for care needs if a child requires any one-to-one assistance throughout the day;
- specialised equipment or furniture etc (Assistive Technology)

Applications to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for Assistive Technology, or access to an SNA, must be accompanied by a report from dated within the last two years. Such reports may include:

- Medical history/reports in so far as it relates to the additional needs of the child that may impact upon their experience within a mainstream class setting
- Speech and Language Therapy Reports, where appropriate
- Psychological Reports: Clinical or Educational, where appropriate
- Other reports which relate to a child's social, emotional, physical or educational wellbeing e.g. where a child has been seen by another agency or professional – social worker, occupational therapist, counsellor etc.

Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant including related needs of other pupils and staff, it will strive to secure those resources. It is the responsibility of the Parents of the child to inform the school of any such needs.

Please note: The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has, in recent years, imposed a cut-off date for receipt of applications 6 months before the start of the school year. Therefore it is very important that parents initiate conversation with the school immediately upon enrolment.

Appendix B: List of Roads within the Kilmacud / Stillorgan Area (as defined by Parish Boundaries)

Allen Park Drive	Hazel Villas	Patrician Close
Allen Park Road	Highridge Green	Patrician Villas
Anville Drive	Kilmacud Avenue	Rathmore Avenue
Ard Lorcaín	Kilmacud Park	Redesdale Court
Ard Lorcan Grove	Kilmacud Road Lower, 1 -245, 2 - 188	Redesdale Crescent
Ard Lorcaín Villas	Kilmacud Road Upper, 1-7A, 101 - 205,	Slieve Rua Drive
Beaufield Manor	Lakelands Avenue	South Avenue
Beaufield Park	Lakelands Close	St. Brigid's Church Road
Brewery Road (1-12)	Lakelands Crescent	St. Kevin's Park
Cedermount	Lakelands Drive	Stillorgan Court
Cherrygarth	Lakelands Grove	Stillorgan Grove
Churchview	Lakelands Lawn	Ulster Terrace
Clonmore Road	Lakelands Road	Stillorgan Heath
Convent Court	Lawnswood Park	Stillorgan Park Avenue
Coolnevaun	Linden Lea Park	Stillorgan Wood
Coppinger Close	Marsham Court	Sweetbriar Lane
Coppinger Glade	Merville Avenue	Thornhill Road
Coppinger Walk	Merville Road	Waltersland Road
Coppinger Wood	Mount Anville Wood	Weirview Drive
Dale Close	Myrtle Grove	Wesbury
Dale Drive	Oaktree Road	Whately Place
Dale Road	Orpen Close	Woodley Park & Pines
Dunstaffnage	Orpen Dale	Woodthorpe
Ellesmere	Orpen Green	Wooview Court/House/Mews
Glenalbyn Road	Orpen Hill	
Hazel Avenue	Orpen Rise	