

Admission Policy of Oatlands College

School Address: Old Stillorgan Road, Mount Merrion, Co Dublin A94HX38

Roll number: 60050E

School Patron: 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 17th 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 the Oatlands 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 the school

Oatlands College is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School for boys, founded by the Christian Brothers and now under the Trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust.

'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 Oatlands 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.

It is the policy of the College to accept for enrolment boys who respect and whose Parents respect the religious and educational philosophy of the ERST Charter, as set out in its Mission Statement. This charter is summarised on the school's website.

Mission Statement.

Oatlands College is an Edmund Rice school community composed of students, teachers and other staff, parents and management under the Trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust [ERST].

The central purpose of this community is the religious, moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic and social education of the students.

Inspired by the vision of Edmund Rice, as set out in the religious and educational philosophy of the ERST Charter, the school seeks to create an atmosphere of Christian care and concern in which Students can grow to maturity.

3. Admission Statement

Oatlands 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.

Oatlands College is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

Oatlands 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 Catholic faith in preference to others.

Oatlands 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 religious denomination in preference to others or where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not a Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

Oatlands College does not have a special class at present.

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.

Oatlands College provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

Oatlands College is a Roman Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Roman Catholic religion, where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6. Oversubscription

Oatlands College currently offers a total of 120 places to students entering 1st year. 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:

Category 1: Applicants who have a brother currently enrolled in the College

Category 2: Applicants from Scoil Mhuire, Oatlands

Category 3: Applicants who are brothers or sons of past pupils / sons of current staff members (No more than 25% of the total places available as set out in the annual admission notice for sons of past pupils)

Category 4: Applicants from Scoil San Treasa, Mount Merrion

Category 5: Applicants from St. Mary's BNS, Booterstown.

Category 6: Applicants from Carysfort NS and Guardian Angels NS, Blackrock.

Category 7: Applicants from St Laurence's BNS, Kilmacud / St. Brigid's BNS, Mart Lane, Foxrock / St Patrick's BNS, Hollypark, Foxrock / St Anne's NS, Shankill, St. Joseph's NS, Tivoli Road.

Category 8: Applicants from all other national schools.

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 all applicants in a particular category cannot be accommodated, they are arranged in order of distance from Oatlands College to their home (as measured by Google Maps).

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 parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his family attending or having previously attended the school, other than (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and (2) parents of a student having attended the school.
In relation to (2) parents 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).
- (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 Oatlands 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 first year.)

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 Oatlands 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 are 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.

Parents/Guardians who no longer require a place that they have accepted are asked to notify the College immediately so the place can be offered to another applicant.

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 Oatlands 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 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 for the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Oatlands College were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed, will be compiled and will remain valid until the beginning of the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Oatlands 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 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 years other than 1st year or during the school year

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 first year, or after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought are as follows:

It is appreciated that in certain exceptional circumstances transfers are unavoidable (e.g. a change of residence or a family moving into an area). In general, however, transfers into Oatlands College are discouraged in the overall interests of the continuity of the student's education.

Decisions in relation to transfer of boys from other second-level schools are made by the Principal on behalf of the Board of Management.

An application to transfer is defined as one from a Student who has previously enrolled in another school in or outside the catchment area, or from a Student who makes application after the commencement of the autumn school term.

It is the policy of the Board of Management not to accept transfer applications from Students already enrolled in other post-primary schools, except in exceptional circumstances. Where the Board is satisfied that such exceptional circumstances do exist, the following considerations and procedures will apply:

- a. The provisions of the School Admission Policy will be adhered to.
- b. A place must be available in the year/class/subject group in question.
- c. The reasons for seeking a transfer will be clearly stated in writing to the Principal of Oatlands College.
- d. Copies of the Student's school reports from his previous school will be submitted to the Principal by the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the Student.
- e. The Principal reserves the right to request a confidential reference from the authorities in the previous school(s). The application will be subject to the satisfactory provision of all relevant information (as requested by the Principal) by the former school and the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the Student. Parents/Guardians will consent to the release of all such appropriate and relevant information by the school from which the Student wishes to transfer to the Principal of Oatlands College. **(Release of Information Form attached to the application form).**
- f. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application in circumstances which might include an established prior record of poor behaviour.
- g. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application where, in the opinion of the Board, the Student poses an unacceptable risk to other Students, to school staff or to school property.

An offer of a place will be subject to:

- The curricular provision of the school being compatible with the Student's previous studies.
- Applicants studying the number of subjects on offer in the particular class/year group and also the mandatory subjects set by the school.
- Consultation with the Education Welfare Officer, if appropriate.
- Signed acceptance by the applicant and his Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the Oatlands College Code of Behaviour and Mission Statement.

- The move, in the opinion of the Principal, on behalf Board of Management, being in the best interests of the student.
- The move, in the opinion of the Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management, being in the best interests of the school, taking into consideration the best interests and rights of students already enrolled in Oatlands College.

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 above.

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

The board of management of Oatlands College 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 Oatlands College 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, Oatlands College places great importance on the religious or spiritual formation of all its students. Each student has his/her 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.