

Admission Policy of Sandford Park School

School Address: Ranelagh, Ranelagh, Dublin 6

Roll number: 60640C

School Patron: Sandford Park Trust CLG

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 governors 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 in 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 Sandford Park 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

Sandford Park School was founded in 1922 by the Anglo-French educator, Mr Alfred Le Peton, to serve the education needs of minority groups not fully catered for in the education system at that time, and so to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance within which the members of all and no denominations and faiths were welcome and might thrive. Right from its inception the children of all and no religious traditions and persuasions have been educated together at Sandford Park School, a historically unique situation which has led to the school being viewed as being entirely appropriate within the 'Block Grant Scheme'. The School has also traditionally catered to the needs of international families. Today, it is a small and distinctive private co-educational day school for students, aged between 12 – 18 years. It is situated on 2.5 hectares of secluded and wooded grounds close to Dublin's city centre. The non-denominational nature of the school is central to its unique character and draws students from a wide variety of backgrounds, countries and cultures together in a secure and intellectually stimulating environment.

Sandford Park School's mission is to educate its Irish and international students in a safe, disciplined and caring environment. Our aim is to prepare them to be responsible citizens. We equip our students with the skills to enable them to think creatively, reason critically and communicate effectively. We accomplish this by fostering a love of learning, respect for cultural diversity and a strong home/school partnership. Our emphasis is on outstanding teaching and learning which is the core of Sandford Park School's philosophy. We focus on the needs of each individual student and encourage him/her to fulfil their potential both inside and outside the classroom so that he/she will acquire the self-confidence and personal attributes necessary to succeed in all walks of life.

The aims of the Admissions Policy are to reflect the school characteristic spirit. Sandford Park is committed to co-education which was introduced in 2013. The School aims to achieve gender balance of student intake. The School supports the principles of inclusiveness, equality of access and participation in co-curricular activities, and takes into account the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act as well

as the funding and resources available to the school.

3. Admission Statement

Sandford Park will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds:

- (a) the gender of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the fact that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned belongs to the Traveller community, or
- (i) the fact 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.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 5](#) below for further details)
- b) a parent/guardian 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) a student is less than 12 years of age in first year on the 1st January of the school year concerned.

5. Oversubscription

In the event that Sandford Park 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 relevant Annual Admission Notice (October prior to enrolment year).

With regard to Waiting Lists, the new admissions policy (September 2020) allows for applicants that were on a waiting list prior to the 1st of February 2020 to receive priority of place, up to 31st January 2025, according to the selection criteria listed below and their date of application, within that criterion until and including September 2025. Applicants in the October application window will be added to this list according to the appropriate criterion but selected on a lottery basis, for the remaining places.

The selection criteria are as follows:

- (i) Siblings of students currently attending the school or who are past pupils of the school
- (ii) Children and grandchildren of past pupils up to a maximum of 25% of places available
- (iii) Children of staff of Sandford Park
- (iv) Successful applications for music scholarships (2 places will be held and auditions will be held in the preceding January of the year of entry into the relevant First Year)
- (v) Applications on our waiting lists up until 31st January 2025 received before 1st February 2020 in accordance with section 62 (11) of the Education Act 2018
- (vi) Applications from primary feeder schools geographically and historically associated with the school
- (vii) All other applicants not in the selection criteria outlined above.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (that is where the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the places in respect of the selection criterion category will be allocated by lottery.

6. 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;
- (b) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (d) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents/guardians, 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, in the case of (1) siblings of an applicant attending or having attended the school and/or (2) a parent or grandparents of an applicant having attended the school, as set out in Section 5.6 above
- (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.

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

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Sandford Park School will be based on the following:

- The Sandford Park Admission Policy
- The Sandford Park Admission Notice for the relevant year (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in Sandford Park's official Application Form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 13](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 14](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our Admission Policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

8. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of Sandford Park, within the timeline outlined in the annual Admissions Notice issued by the school in respect of the relevant year. The offer will include a confirmation of acceptance form to complete and return with the deposit by the date indicated on the offer letter.

If a student is not offered a place in Sandford Park, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the applicant's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the applicant'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 16](#) below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Sandford Park School, 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.

10. 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 Sandford Park School where—

- it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- 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.
- the parent/guardian 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 9](#) above.

The Board of Governors has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the Board of Governors is required under section 15 (1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

11. 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 governors/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).

12. 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 Sandford Park 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 Sandford Park 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.

13. 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 a place is available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in respect of the relevant school year in order of date of receipt of the application.

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students into a year other than First Year and during the school year are as follows:

- A place must be available in the year group subject to conditions including subject choice availability and acceptance of the code of behaviour.
- The school reserves the right to refuse an application in circumstance which might include an established record of poor behaviour or where a student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, school staff or school property.
- In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

15. Charging of fees

Sandford Park School is a fee-charging secondary school in the voluntary sector. Fees and charges are determined annually by the board of governors and payable as detailed in the annual Fee Information Notice for parents/guardians. These payments are a condition of attendance for a student and his/her participation in certain activities and availing of certain services. In addition, Sandford Park requires a deposit on acceptance of a place in the school. Up to date payment of school fees and charges is a condition of continued enrolment in the school.

16. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Governors

The parent/guardian 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 governors 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 governors 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/guardian 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 governors **prior to making an appeal** under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Governors)

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 Governors prior to making an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the board of governors).

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.

Signed: _____

Chairman of the Board of Governors

Date: _____

14. Sept 2020