



**Wilson's Hospital School
Multyfarnham, Co Westmeath**

Admissions Policy

School Roll Number 63300Q

School Patron/s: Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Ireland

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 School Management Board 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 1st 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 Wilson's Hospital School admission process are set out in the school's Annual Admissions 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 Admissions 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

Wilson's Hospital School is a Church of Ireland co-educational post primary school with a Church of Ireland and Anglican ethos under the patronage of the of Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Ireland.

"Church of Ireland/Anglican" ethos in the context of a Church of Ireland post primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Anglican Christian tradition, which aims at promoting:

The education of the whole person regarding their spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, emotional aesthetic and moral development in harmony with the Christian faith as expressed in the Anglican tradition, which seeks to be characterised by inclusivity in approach, conveying certain values, being reflexive, affirming of the student, and caring. An Anglican ethos is focused on service to the local community as an out-working of the Gospel imperative to reach out to all people in a spirit of engagement and invitation to “come and see” (John 1:39). The ethos of a Church of Ireland school reflects the communal Scriptural values of the faith community, in a positive and encouraging student-centred understanding of living life in the Spirit of God (Gal. 5:25).

An ethos based on the Anglican Christian tradition seeks to nurture and encourage the formation of the intellectual, academic, sporting, social and religious abilities of each child within the framework of the community of faith. A Church of Ireland ethos encourages intellectual diversity of thought and encourages the individual to seek to understand themselves, the world around them and the connection between the world and the Divine. This understanding of school ethos promotes pluralism in thought and living, in the context of a Christian school community. Drawing on its Anglican tradition, the Church of Ireland School encourages parental involvement, highlighting the importance of the family in the social and emotional development of the child, and more broadly, the community of the school and church.

The Core Values of a Church of Ireland boarding school might be characterised as comprising of:

- Faith:
Living out the life-changing implications of a belief in the Divine, the person of Jesus Christ and recognises that every person is made in the image and likeness of God; conveying the reassurance and stability of Christian values in the life of the believer.
- Excellence:
Striving to ensure that standards of teaching and the delivery of the curriculum is at the highest level of quality. Pursuing high standards in all things.
- Justice:
Looking for fairness in our dealings with others, seeking to order our lives and the world around us in a context of equality for all people and to address unjust imbalances of power. To embrace compassion for our fellow human beings and to do all we can to make ourselves, our communities and our society conscious of the necessity for compassion, the cause of right and truth.
- Reflexivity:
Open to continually being self-reflective, combatting our own biases, desires and motivations and engaging with pluralism of thought.
- Affirming:
Conscious of the importance of affirming to all students and staff that they are valued, supported and loved. That they are unique in themselves, are entitled to live their own lives and not to be judged by any external standards, other than how we all engage with those around them and the world.
- Caring:
Focusing on the experience of the young person to ensure that their experience of their time in school is accepting, happy and positive.

- Community

Enjoying the strength from membership of a community and the identity arising from strong tradition.

Legal Undertaking:

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the School Management Board of Wilson's Hospital 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.

Statement of Ethos

The Will of Andrew Wilson established Wilson's Hospital School in 1725. This Will is the foundation document of Wilson's Hospital School.

To ensure the implementation of the Will, The Church of Ireland Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, and Bishops of Meath, Tuam and Kilmore were appointed Trustees and Guardians of the School.

The Trustees and Guardians are the patrons of the school and are responsible under the law for the provision of its statement of ethos.

Wilson's Hospital School is therefore to be ordered according to the following principles in order that its ethos may be maintained:

1. As a boarding and day school for members of the Church of Ireland, allowing that students of other denominations may be admitted according to an enrolment policy which allows preference of admission for members of the Church of Ireland and which ensures that a clear majority of the students of the school are members of the Church of Ireland, and that a clear majority of the students of the school are boarders.
2. As a secondary school operating in accordance with the rules of the Department of Education and Skills, covering a six-year cycle of secondary education from entrance at first form to the Leaving Certificate at the conclusion of sixth form.
3. As a school which provides an education balancing the academic, practical, moral and spiritual aspects of life, and which is consonant with the established Anglican ethos of respect for the Christian Scriptures, for the tradition of the Christian Church through the centuries, and for the dignity of human conscience and reason.
4. As an institution reflecting a religious ethos in the Anglican tradition, whereby religious education, religious worship, and the use of the chapel for religious purposes, in each case consonant with the Anglican tradition, are regarded as integral to the life of the school.

3. Admission Statement

Wilson's Hospital 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 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, and does not discriminate where it admits a student of Church of Ireland denomination in preference to others,
- (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.

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 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) Wilson's Hospital School is a Church of Ireland school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Church of Ireland denomination, where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

5. 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 Admissions Notice:

ORDER OF CRITERIA OF ADMISSIONS

1. Children of a minority religion of a Protestant denomination in the reformed tradition. Evidence of affiliation must be produced with application. (A letter from a Cleric/Pastor/Minister or Baptismal Certificate)
2. Children who seek to board at the school on a continual basis consistent with the established boarding ethos of the school.
3. Children who are siblings of a student attending or having fully completed their education at Wilson's Hospital School.
4. Children of a parent or grandparent who previously attended the school subject to a maximum number of these places being filled, pursuant to this criterion not exceeding 25%.
5. Children one of whose parents/guardians is an employee of the school.
6. Children who have attended a school under Protestant Management for at least 3 years.
7. Day students who reside within 8 km of the School.

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:

Where two or more applicants are equally entitled on any one of the criteria, preference will be given to the applicant(s) who complies with the next criterion.

In the event of applicants having equal entitlement to enrolment, and where such applications exceed the number of places available, each application will be adjudicated based on proximity to the school, using Google Maps from their EIRCODE provided in Application Form.

The operation of criteria 4, 5, and 6 will be in such manner to ensure compliance with relevant equality legislation.

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, including naíonraí,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school, other than in relation to fees charged to the boarding house;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of acceptance other than in the case of admission to the residential element of a boarding school;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; other than Criteria 3 and 4 in Order of Criteria of Admissions;
- (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 Admissions Notice of the school for the school year concerned.

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Wilson's Hospital School will be based on the following:

- Our school's Admission Policy
- The school's Annual Admissions Notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our Annual Admissions Notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 13](#) 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 decide 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 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Wilson's Hospital 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 Wilson's Hospital School 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 Admissions 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 9](#) above.

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 data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another School Management Board 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 Wilson's Hospital School 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 Wilson's Hospital School 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 Admissions Notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

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

14. Changing status of application

A student who successfully applies for and who has accepted a place as a boarder in the School will not receive any priority if at any time s/he subsequently applies instead to be enrolled as a day student. In such cases, this student will be deemed to be making a new application and the application will be determined in accordance with this Admissions Policy and will be afforded the priority that applies to an applicant making an application for a day place. This means that an applicant who had been enrolled as a boarder in the school, who subsequently applies to be admitted as a day student, may not be successful in applying to be enrolled in the School as a day student. The boarding space held by the applicant shall not be deemed to be a day space for the purpose of his/her application.

15. 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 who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

With regard to admissions after the commencement of the school year, mid-stream Irish and international admissions, in addition to the above criteria, allocations will be made in accordance with the spaces available at the time and also references from previous schools and an interview with the applicant may be taken into account. Entrance into Form 3 is dependent on experience of learning in a school within the Irish education system and entrance into Form 6 is not available except in special circumstances, as approved by the School Management Board. The Student Transfer Form must be completed by the existing school and returned to us prior to securing the place.

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

The board of Wilson's Hospital School or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, 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 except for the payment of fees relating to the boarding resources in the boarding school.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

Wilson's Hospital School has the subject of Religious Education as a core subject in the Junior Cycle. This is not religious instruction.

In the Senior Cycle there is a non-exam Religion class once a week for students. Should the student wish to withdraw from this class a letter must be sent to the Principal. Arrangements will be made for the student to be facilitated in another room while this class proceeds.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the School Management Board

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills. The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the School Management Board 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 School Management Board prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission. An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the School Management Board).

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 School Management Board prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the School Management Board).

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.