

Admissions Policy



"Live as free people"

St Peter's Community School

Approved November 2017
Amended January 2023
Reviewed September 2023

Introduction

St. Peter's is a personal 350 pupil second-level school for boys and girls situated in a scenic, safe location, four miles from Douglas, two miles from Monkstown and a half mile from Passage West. There is a bus service to and from the school gates, serving Douglas Road, Rochestown, Passage West, Glenbrook, Monkstown, Shanbally and Ringaskiddy. Pupils are supervised at all breaks and are only allowed out of school grounds at the request of their parents.

Mission Statement

St. Peter's is a vibrant dynamic and caring school committed to the academic, personal and spiritual development of all its pupils. It has a Christian ethos within which other traditions are welcomed and respected. In St. Peter's we encourage excellence by fostering a love of learning and by promoting a rich and diverse range of educational opportunities. We believe in empowering and equipping our pupils to become well-qualified and rounded individuals who can thrive in and contribute to an ever changing world.

Management

St. Peter's is managed by a Board of Management representative of the Trustees, parents and teaching staff. The Board is responsible for the government and direction of the school as per the Deed of Trust. The internal organisation, management and discipline of the school are delegated to the Principal. The school is directly funded by and operates within the regulations of the Department of Education & Science and within the context of statutory regulations as set out in the Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act (2000) and in accordance with the school's Deed of Trust. Correspondence with the Board of Management shall be addressed to the Secretary of the Board of Management.

St. Peter's Community School will co-operate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

St. Peter's Community School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

History

St. Peter's was founded in 1988 by an amalgamation of St. Mary's Secondary School of the Sisters of Mercy and Passage West Vocational School of the County Cork VEC. The founding bodies remain as trustees of the school.

School Profile and General Information

St. Peter's promotes for each pupil:

- A love of learning and study
- A happy and safe school experience
- Dedication to achieving excellent results
- The opportunities offered by a broad curriculum
- The availability of up to date laboratories and facilities
- Access to a creative range of extra curricular activities

St. Peter's aims to provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the community. All pupils take the Junior Certificate, the Transition Year and the Leaving Certificate Programmes.

The school has a well-qualified and dedicated teaching and non-teaching staff including a Chaplain and a Guidance Counsellor. St. Peter's has an active Pupils' Council, Parents' Association and supervised After School Study. More complete details about St. Peter's, including facilities, curriculum, uniform and Code of Behaviour, are in the School Prospectus—a copy of which is available from the school office.

Prospective parents and pupils are welcome to visit St. Peter's at the annual school Open Day and otherwise by appointment.

Enrolment Policy

General

St. Peter's Community School provides second-level education, open to girls and boys, in its catchment area which is the Harbour area from Rochestown/Ringaskiddy, including Cobh subject to:

- Sufficient places being available.
- Agreeing to undertake a six-year cycle, including the Junior Certificate, Transition year and the Leaving Certificate Programmes. (Significant absence, for example 55 days absent from school in any one year, may at the discretion of the Board of Management be deemed not to meet the requirements to undertake a six-year cycle).
- Completion of enrolment procedures by applicants.
- Undertaking to comply with the school's Codes, Policies and norms.

Selection Procedures

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, priority will be given to applicants in the following order:

- i. Brothers or sisters of pupils attending St. Peter's.
- ii. Pupils of primary schools in the catchment area, Star of the Sea, Passage West; Scoil Barra Naofa, Monkstown; Shanbally N.S., Ringaskiddy N.S., Rusbrooke N.S., An Gaelscoil Úi Éigearthaigh, Cobh; Walterstown N.S., Cobh; Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh, Cobh; St. Joseph's N.S.; St. Luke's N.S.; St. Columba's Girl's N.S.; St. Columba's Boy's N.S.; Scoil Nicholas, Frankfield; Scoil Phadraig Naofa and Douglas/Rochestown Educate Together N.S.
- iii. Residents of the Harbour area from Rochestown to Ringaskiddy, including Cobh.
- iv. Others may be accepted subject to places being available.

Enrolment Procedure

- School personnel visit primary schools in the first term of each year.
- Application forms and relevant school documentation are distributed and notification is given on an Open day for intending pupils and their parents.
- The Open Day is advertised so as to inform parents and is held in September-October.
- In relation to applications for first year of the following year applications will be accepted on and from the date of the Open Day of the previous year. The closing date for receipt of application forms is a specific date each year generally two weeks after the Open Day.
- Completed Application Forms, along with non-refundable deposits for the Book Rental Scheme/Student Services Charge, must be returned to the school on or before the specified date in any given year.
- Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to carefully read and sign the enrolment form, acknowledging their commitment to compliance with the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and all school policies.
- Late applications may result in deferred enrolment.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified of confirmation of enrolment within twenty-one days of official receipt of the application.
- All applicants will be required to complete assessment tests. The results of the tests are used by the school to evaluate the needs of the student.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are advised of the date, time and location of assessment tests and enrolment interviews – if scheduled.

Transfers

The Board of Management will only consider applications for enrolment of students attending other second level schools outside the catchment area, providing post-primary courses on the condition that:

- The student will not have a negative impact on the capacity of the teachers to teach and of

- other students to learn.
- A completed application form and a school transfer form are submitted.
- Such other information is provided in relation to the students' educational performance, school attendance and behaviour, as the Board deems necessary.
- In the event of a student being expelled from another school and seeking enrolment in St. Peter's, all appeals (Section 28/29) in the student's existing school must be exhausted before an application is considered.

Such applications will only be considered for the commencement of a new school year, except in exceptional circumstances, e.g. family relocation, and will be processed in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in this policy as they relate to students in general and to students with special educational needs. Transfer applications will be responded to within twenty-one days of receipt of same. The enrolment procedure for transfers will also include an enrolment interview and may include an assessment test.

Reserved Rights of the Board to Refuse Enrolment

The Board of Management is committed to an inclusive school open to all the children in the local community. However, in certain circumstances, the Board reserves the right to refuse an enrolment application, where in the opinion of the Board:

- Adequate physical accommodation is not available for the applicant.
- Enrolment would constitute a risk to the health and safety of other students enrolled.
- The school programme is unsuitable to the educational needs of the student and alternative suitable arrangements for an appropriate programme cannot reasonably be made at the school.
- Enrolment would clearly have a demonstrable negative impact on the capacity of the school to deliver programmes to other students and alternative arrangements cannot reasonably be made at the school.
- Where it is not satisfied that it has sufficient information to make an informed decision on the educational needs of the student.

Special Needs

School personnel will meet parent(s)/guardian(s) and liaise with local primary schools in the catchment area to request information and necessary relevant medical, educational and/or psychological reports regarding a child's special needs and the profile of support services needed. Where such reports are inadequate the school may request immediate assessment.

Admission Policy for ASD Class in St. Peter's Community School

This policy must be read in conjunction with and is part of the overall Admission Policy for the school.

The aim of the ASD Class is to offer a specific learning environment within a mainstream post primary school. This setting facilitates optimum inclusion as part of the school community with access to mainstream educational activities that are available and that are deemed appropriate to the ongoing education of the student.

All applicants must have an assessed primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The assessment must be in line with the established DES criteria of DSM-V and ICD 10. All applications must be accompanied by an assessment report, carried out by an Educational/Clinical Psychologist approved by the DES, recommending the applicant as suitable.

A prospective student for the ASD Class must have a professional recommendation, from a NEPS Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, Educational Psychologist, Psychiatrist, or from a multi-disciplinary team (Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Social Worker, and/or Physiotherapist), for placement in an autism specific class. All reports in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Board of Management. The withholding of such reports from the Board of Management may invalidate an enrolment application at any time.

Parents should note that under the official DES guidelines, the number of student places available in the ASD Class in St. Peter's Community School is **six students**. It should be noted

that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily guarantee the student a place in the ASD Class.

The Board of Management require that parents must accept that the enrolment process only proceeds where the educational and physical needs of the applicants as identified can be met within the ASD Class.

The parents of the applicant must accept and agree to the St. Peter's Community School Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

The ASD Class will only cater for children that are 12 years or more, and less than 18 years of age, on the 1st of September of the school year in question.

Enrolment:

All applications for enrolment in the ASD Class will be considered within the context of the school's Admission Policy. Where the number of applicants exceeds the places available, priority will be given in the following order:

- Students currently enrolled in St. Peter's Community School
- Siblings of current students in the school who apply
- Applicants attending one of our feeder schools who are already enrolled in a special class
- Applicants resident within the defined school Catchment Area (see General Students Admission Policy) who are enrolled in a special class

Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process, St. Peter's Community School will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the school, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

Right to Appeal

Parents/Guardians have the right to appeal to the Secretary of the Department of Education & Science under Section 29 of the Education Act against a decision of the Board of Management to refuse admission. An application form for such an appeal is available from the Principal.

Amendments

If and where considered prudent and desirable the Board of Management, after consultation with the relevant partners, may amend or add to this Enrolment Policy. Any such amendments or additions shall come into effect three months after being passed by the Board and shall be added to this document before further circulation of the Policy.

Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed as necessary, by the Board of Management.