



## **Enrolment/Admissions Policy**

### Mission Statement.

*St Augustine's College is a caring community, committed to offering all of its students and staff a happy and safe environment in which they can work, learn, pray and play.*

*We endeavor to facilitate the academic, personal, moral, spiritual and social development of each member of our school community. Our aim is to provide a balanced and well-rounded education for all our students.*

## Admissions Policy

**St. Augustine's College** is a co-ed Catholic Voluntary Secondary School under the patronage of the Augustinian Trust. The school subscribes to the vision and values of the Augustinian order.

### **Characteristic Spirit**

The characteristic spirit of our school is based on the vision and values of the Augustinian Trust, which itself draws on the charisms and traditions of the Augustinian order.

In a spirit of creative fidelity to the founder St Augustine of Hippo, we seek to address, through education, some of the needs of young people in Ireland today.

In our commitment to continue in the ministry of education, we find our primary inspiration in the life and in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

We place a high priority on the development of the religious faith of our students and we see the integration of both life and faith as our ideal.

In the School Community, where we work, we seek to develop a view of reality which is firmly based on the values of the Gospel. Accordingly, our policies and practices reflect the Christian values of concern and justice.

We are a learning community which values and respects all students equally. We recognise that each student is unique and has different gifts as well as needs. We are committed to providing an ordered learning environment which encourages all students to strive to realise their full potential.

St. Augustine's College consistently strives for excellence and continues in confidence to build upon a proud history of providing quality Catholic education for its students.

We value highly a close working rapport with the many partners; the teaching and ancillary staffs, the parents/guardians and the leaders of the local Churches who share our commitment to education as a liberating and empowering experience in the lives of young people.

Our characteristic spirit is underpinned by a philosophy of education that has at its centre the unique dignity of the human person as a child of God. The school sees the interaction of people from different backgrounds and the inclusive nature of the school as a gift that will enrich the community of the school and promote the growth and learning of all. Therefore, the school values each student and their family. It welcomes, and is sensitive to each individual, seeking to respond to their individual needs through:

### **The Curriculum:**

The school provides a comprehensive curriculum that has breadth, depth and academic rigour. It facilitates and supports the students' search for truth and meaning. It encourages them to strive for excellence in all areas of human growth. It provides a range of learning opportunities including curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that helps them to explore their talents and to achieve their potential. It prepares them for active participation in society and for living fully in all areas of life including the world of work. It encourages them to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and decision-making.

## **Student Care:**

The school seeks to support and challenge its students so that they can make the most of their time in school. Through its Student Care System, it aims to help them to become integrated self-reliant people who respect all that is good in themselves, in each person and in life. It provides programmes of language support, help with study, and guidance counselling where necessary. It develops links with family, seeking to work in partnership with parents and guardians.

## **Faith Development:**

The Education Act stipulates: ‘A recognised school shall ...promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students . . . having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school.’ (Education Act S. 9(d)).

This school has a special commitment to the development of the spiritual dimension of the lives of its members. To this end, Faith Formation and the Religious Education programme play a key role.

- The ideal is that students follow the State programme in Religious Education which is suitable for students of all faiths and those of no faith.
- If a student or parents/guardians have a conscientious objection to specific elements of the Religion Programme, the school, following discussions with parents/guardians, will allow the student to go to a supervised setting if such is available or to sit at the back of the Religion class. In keeping with the school’s commitment to the holistic development of all students, the student will be expected to study a religious or philosophical text during this period.
- Optional enrichment modules for different denominations and faiths may be provided.
- The school celebrates the major Christian feasts, and the major feasts of other faiths can be acknowledged and celebrated in an appropriate way.

It is hoped that the gospel values inherent in the culture of the school will be internalised in the values, attitudes and behaviours of all members of the school community, and will find expression in their respect and care for one another.

The school is open to, and welcomes all who share this vision and wish to benefit from it.

## **Admissions Statement**

St Augustine’s College shall not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on the grounds of civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community or in respect of the student concerned having special educational needs.

As St Augustine’s College is a Co-Educational school, it will make equal provision for both male and female students. In the circumstances where a student transitions from female to male or male to female, the school will discuss with the student and his/her parents the most appropriate way to respond to the needs of the student, within the resources available to the school and in the context of inclusiveness and respect for the unique dignity of the student as a child of God.

## **Operating Context**

St Augustine's College is a co-educational, grant-aided, Voluntary Catholic Secondary School under the trusteeship of The Augustinian Trust and the management of a Board of Management representing trustees, parents and teachers.

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education & Skills rules and regulations, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, the Religious and Educational Philosophy of St. Augustine, the availability of funding and resources, the school supports the principles of inclusiveness, equality of access, and participation in the school, parental choice in relation to admission and respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society.

The Board of Management must comply with DES guidelines in relation to staffing provisions, accommodation and the health and welfare of children, which also affect the number of new admissions that the School may admit in any one year.

The Board of Management endeavours to carry out its duties in accordance with section 15 (I) of the Education Act 1998, related legislation and any DES or Patron guidelines currently available.

### **Structure of the Board of Management:**

There are four nominees of the Patron – one of whom acts as Chairperson. There are two parent nominees and a further two nominees from the Teaching Staff. The Principal acts as the Secretary to the Board but is not a member of the Board.

## **Finance**

The financial and teaching resources of the school are provided through a combination of Department of Education & Skills grants and teacher allocations, voluntary contributions and fund raising. The implementation of the school plan and school policy must have due regard to resources and funding available. The school operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the Department of Education & Skills, and the school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education & Skills, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

### **Code of Behaviour/ School Policy**

Admission is subject to the acceptance of the School's Code of Behaviour and all other school policies and including any future amendments to same. These are available on school website [www.staugustines.ie](http://www.staugustines.ie) The signed acceptance of these policies on the application form (see appendix 1.) is formal acceptance of school policy. These codes and policies are reviewed regularly and may be subject to change.

## **Admission Policy**

An admissions policy facilitates the orderly intake of students into the school. In accordance with the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act 2000, schools have a statutory obligation to publish their admissions policy, i.e. to set the manner in which students are admitted to and participate in the life of the school

### ***Admission***

We admit students who:

- have completed sixth class or its equivalent into first year (junior cycle) and other applicants into the year appropriate to their educational attainment
- are willing, in conjunction with his/her parents/guardians, to accept the school ethos and the school's Code of Conduct

To fulfil the Department of Education & Skills rules, all secondary school students must be aged twelve (12) on 1<sup>st</sup> January in the calendar year following the child's entry into First Year and a birth certificate will be required.

Confirmation, in writing, is required that parents/guardians and the student accept the Code of Conduct.

It is our policy that all students have equal opportunity to participate in the life of the school. This applies to all areas of the curriculum and to all extracurricular activities. While the *Augustinian ethos prevails*, we show respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society.

It is our policy that the position of all students in the school be reviewed on a yearly basis, based on the student's attendance, performance and compliance with the code of conduct of the school.

It is our policy to admit new students to all year groups based on their acceptance of the above points and subject to class size and sufficient resources being available in the school. First year enrolment cap will be decided by the Board of Management on a yearly basis. Class groups cannot exceed 30 students.

The Board of Management has determined the maximum number of students by the limit recommended by the DES in practical classes (20 students in Home Economics and 24 in remaining practical and science classes) and depending on available resources of staffing, timetable and classroom constraints. Transition Year Enrolment may be limited depending on available resources and demand. This enrolment cap will be decided by the Board of Management on a yearly basis.

The Board of Management reserves the right to increase or decrease the number enrolled in First Year, on a yearly basis subject to the number applying being sufficient for the provision of an extra class of 20 students (as determined by the maximum allowed in practical classes). Places will be offered to students in the order on the admissions waiting list and depending on available resources of staffing and timetable constraints. Parents / Guardians are requested to take out an annual personal insurance organised by the school for their child and to pay an annual general purpose contribution to help cover the cost of examination stationery, transport to certain school games, printing and postage etc. This general-purpose contribution also incorporates the cost of the school diary and locker rental. Contact, in confidence, should be made with the Principal if special consideration is required in relation to this request.

## **1. First Year Admissions procedure:**

### ***Open Day***

The Open Day for the recruitment of new students will take place in the school during Term 1.

No enrolments will be accepted before the date of the official Open Day as determined, each year, by the school authority.

### ***Application Procedure.***

#### **Allocation of first year places:**

Allocation Process:

The annual intake of students is determined by the Board of Management each year". This will be decided on/by November 2018

Application forms for entry in September 2019 will be available from the school office  
From 15/10/2018

An Open morning will take place in the school on Sat. 13/10/2018

Application forms should be returned to the school office before 08/11/2018

Places will be allocated by 30 /1/2019

You should contact the school if you have not heard from us within a week of this date.

Students wishing to enrol into First Year in St. Augustine's College must complete an application form and return it to the Principal by the date stated at the end of the form. The Application form is available in the school during the Open Day and from the school's office after the Open Day of the enrolment year. No applications will be accepted before the Open Day. The Closing date for Application to the school will be stated on the application form. Should any applications be received after this closing date and time, they will be placed on a waiting list until after all other applications have been processed.

After the closing date the following stages will apply: All applications will be processed by the Principal and the school's administration staff adhering to the admissions criteria listed below.

Admissions Criteria in descending order by the date of application

1. Siblings (brothers or sisters of students of the school)
2. Sons and daughters of the staff of the college
3. Nieces and Nephews of members of the Augustinian Order

Should enrolment reach the maximum number, initial places will be offered on the above criteria, a simple supervised lottery will be used to determine the allocation of remaining available places and the order of any subsequent admissions waiting list. The admissions waiting list will not be final until the lottery is complete. Late applications into first year will be considered only after the current admissions waiting list is cleared and this is subject to resources and class size.

Where a number of siblings are applying for admission their application may be treated as a single unit. This is in the interest of maintaining a family unit. In the event of a lottery where this unit is successful, then all members of the unit will be accepted for admission unless drawn for the last remaining place resulting in exceeding enrolment maximum. In this case only one place will be offered and other applicant/s will be placed on top of waiting list. Parents / Guardians will be informed in writing whether a place is offered to their child following a Board of Management meeting after the closing date for applications.

Places not taken up by successful candidates will be offered to those on the admissions waiting list in numerical order.

**Admissions waiting list:**

Parents/Guardians of pupils on the admissions waiting list will be informed of their position/number on the waiting list. Parents/Guardians of pupils in the next place on the waiting list will continue to be informed whenever a vacancy occurs and these parents will have the option to accept or refuse the place offered to their child.

The waiting list will remain open until the last Friday in September of the year of entry. Following this date the waiting list will cease to operate for that academic year.

**Late Applications waiting list:**

Applications, following the closing date, as per Application Form, will be placed on a late applications waiting list in the order in which they are received and will be considered only after all other applications on the admissions waiting list have been dealt with.

As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days, after Parents / Guardians have provided all the relevant information, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the Parents/Guardians in writing thereof. (Education Welfare Act (Section 19 (3)).

**2. Students with Special Educational Needs**

St Augustine's College welcomes applications from parents/guardians of students with special educational needs. The school will use the resources (finance and personnel) provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs and will ensure that these students are free to participate in the life of the school in so far as is reasonably practicable.

While recognising and fully supporting the rights of parents/guardians to have a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to provide for students with particular educational needs is dependent on resources suitable to those needs being supplied by the Department of Education and Skills. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make the Board of Management aware of any special needs as early as possible, as it may take some time for the Department to process applications for the resources needed. In order to determine the specific resources, facilities and learning support required, the Board will request a copy of the student's medical and/or psychological report.

Where such a report is not available, the Board will request an immediate assessment. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the student relative to their special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school can meet the needs of the student as specified in the report. The school will also request information from the student's primary school with regard to such matters as learning support and/or resource hours. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to the student commencing to attend the school, request the Department of Education and Skills to provide the resources necessary to meet the needs of the student as outlined in the psychological or medical report. A representative of the Board will meet with the parents/guardians of the student to discuss the student's needs and the school's capacity to meet them. It may be necessary for the Board to postpone the attendance of a student at the school, pending the receipt of an assessment report, and/or the provision of appropriate resources by the Department of Education and Skills to meet the needs specified in the psychological or medical report.

The school commits itself to working closely with the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) to ensure that students with special needs are given every assistance possible, subject to available resources, to achieve their educational potential.

### **3. Transition Year Admissions Policy**

- Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made in accordance with the school's admissions policy as outlined herein.
- Restrictions are placed on the numbers of available places by the size of the building, the limits on class sizes and the overall number of students for which the College can cater.
- The intake of Transition Year students may be limited and final number will be ratified by the BOM in the final term of each school year taking account of resources available to the school and class size restrictions.
- This number is open to review by the Board of Management on a yearly basis.
- The maximum number of students in any class will be 24 students.
- **Admission is at all times based, first and foremost, on suitability of candidates applying and maximum numbers are based on maximum 'suitable candidates'.**
- The school will not at any stage be compelled to fill classes to maximum numbers even if the number of applications equals or exceeds maximum number of places.

**The simple criteria below will be used to determine the allocation of places in the following order:-**

- Existing Junior Certificate students who have made application before closing date as indicated on application form.
- Remaining applicants i.e. external applicants

Where the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places, a system of selection will apply with a waiting list being established from this selection. Candidates will be informed of their place on the waiting list. If a place becomes available subsequently, it will be offered to the first person on the waiting list at that time.

### **Suitability of Candidates.**

Students who are seen as unsuitable for the Transition Year programme or whose interests are judged by the school as being better served by proceeding to the Leaving Certificate Programme, shall be directed to progress to Fifth Year.

Student suitability will be based on:

- School Records (attendance, behaviour, academic and performance)
- Input from teachers, class teachers and year head, Guidance, Chaplaincy, SEN and School Management
- Interview with student and parent/guardian.

Student will only be interviewed if the student's school record and teacher's input deems the student in the unsuitable category. The interview will be conducted by the Transition Year Coordinator along with a Year Head and a member of the Management Team. Parent / Guardian will be present at the interview.

### **Enrolment Procedure**

#### **a) Internal Applicants**

Only applications from the present Junior Certificate class at St. Augustine's College will be processed in the first round. If the number of suitable candidates does not exceed the number of available places then applications will be accepted from the other candidates' i.e. external applicants. If the number of suitable candidates exceeds the number of available places, then a lottery based selection will be applied.

The Student support team may highlight any student, regardless of numbers, who's interest they feel may not be best served by enrolment in TY. All students highlighted will be interviewed.

If more students apply than places, it will be the decision of the interview board as to who will get a place. Successful candidates will be notified by email and in person and must return the acceptance form with the appropriate deposit before the closing date to secure a place on the Transition Year programme. Any place not accepted by the closing date will be offered to the next candidate on the waiting list.

#### **b) External Applicants**

Once the internal waiting list is cleared by cut-off date places will be offered to external applicants.

All the external candidates will be interviewed to assess suitability as per transfers from other schools (see below). Places will be awarded based on interview scores and in accordance with the school's admissions policy.

#### **4. Transfer of Students from other schools**

St Augustine's College will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking transfer to the school from another post-primary school or seeking to be admitted during the academic year whether from another Irish school or from abroad. The parents/guardians must apply in writing.

If there is no place available in the year group for which a place is required, then the parents/guardians will be so informed and their child will be refused admission within 21 days of receipt of their written application. The parents/guardians can appeal this decision in accordance with the appeal process set out in this document.

If there is a place available in the year group the parents/guardians may be interviewed by the Principal who may be accompanied by the Deputy Principal or a member of the teaching staff. The parents/guardians must make full disclosure of the circumstances leading to the application to transfer to St Augustine's College and must give written authorisation to their child's previous school to provide full information on the student's record to-date. The views of the Educational Welfare Officer on the desirability or otherwise of the transfer may be sought.

The reason for the proposed transfer will be discussed with the parents/guardians and the student, as appropriate.

Transfer to the school shall be on the basis that it would be in the best interests of the student concerned, given curricular provision, subject choices, and facilities available at the time and any other relevant factors affecting the educational benefits to the applicant and the likely impact on students already in the school.

In some circumstances it may be decided to defer admission until the beginning of the next academic year rather than immediately. The parents/guardians can appeal this decision in accordance with the appeal process set out in this document.

A decision about the transfer of the student to this school will be conveyed to the parents/guardians within 21 days of the interview referred to above on condition that all the required data has been received by the Principal.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse transfer into the school as set out later in this document under the heading: Right of Board of Management to refuse an application for Admission. The parents/guardians can appeal this decision in accordance with the appeal process set out in this document.

### **Board of Management's right to refuse admission**

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for enrolment in exceptional circumstances subject to the terms of the Educational Welfare Act.

### **Implementation of Admissions Policy**

Our school implements its admissions policy through:

- The distribution of an up-to-date, detailed prospectus
- Visits by the Principal/Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor to the primary schools in West Waterford
- An annual open day to introduce the school to prospective students
- Completed application form which must be submitted by the required date as stated on the application form
- A follow-up open evening for parents/guardians of enrolled students

### **Parent – Student Responsibility Statement**

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act, S 23(4), parents of prospective students will be provided with a copy of the school's Code of Conduct and they will be required to confirm by signing that the Code of Conduct is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student, as long as he/she is attending the school.

### **Our Code of Conduct specifies:**

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school and the measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school and the grounds for removing a suspension
- The procedures to be followed relating to notification of a student's absence from school
- Dress code

## **Appeal**

*The Board of Management of the school shall not refuse to admit a student to the school, except where such refusal is in accordance with the admissions policy of the school.*

- In the event of a student's application for admission to the school being refused the Parents / Guardian have a right to appeal, in the first instance, to the Board of Management of the school.
- The Board of Management may make provision to meet the Parents / Guardians or the Parents / Guardians may request to meet the Board of Management at a subsequent meeting of the Board.
- The Parents / Guardians will be informed in writing of the Board's decision, and the reasons for that decision.
- The right to appeal will be restated and the Parents / Guardians will be advised of the subsequent procedures for appeals to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, (Education Act 1998, Section 29 (d).
  
- The Parents' / Guardians' appeal should be stated on the application form provided by the Department of Education and Science (Circular M48/01).
  
- The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days (This does not include state exam dates) from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians concerned. (Circular, M48/01).
  
- An appeal may be made to: The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, The Appeals Administration Unit, Department of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. Policy ratified by all partners – Teaching Staff; Students; Parents' Association and the Board of Management Date:

## **Review and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed regularly. In practice, this process should be coordinated by a core committee consisting of two staff members, two Parents / Guardians nominated by the Parents' Association and two students in consultation with the wider school community. On -going review and evaluation should take cognisance of changing information, legislation, developments in the school based programme and feedback from parents/guardians, staff and students. The policy should be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

## **Review of Admissions Policy**

The schools admissions Policy will be reviewed regularly. Next review Sept 2020

**Ratification by the Board of Management**

**Date .**

**Agreed** by the Augustinian School Trust on

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date; \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2018

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date; \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2018

Secretary Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date; \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2018

