



St. Patrick's College
Lacken Cross, Killala - Co. Mayo

Admission Policy

St Patrick's College
Lacken Cross
Killala
Co Mayo

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Appendices: Appendix 1 - Abbreviations

1. Background

1.1. Programmes and Subjects

- Junior Certificate
- Transition Year
- LCVP

Junior Cycle Subjects

- Irish
- English
- Maths
- Science
- French
- Geography
- History
- Art
- Business
- Home Economics
- Metalwork
- Materials Technology (Wood)
- Technical Graphics
- Music
- Religion
- Physical Education
- SPHE
- CSPE
- Computer Studies

Senior Cycle Subjects

- Irish
- English
- Maths
- French
- Geography
- History
- Construction Studies
- Engineering
- Home Economics
- Design and Communication Graphics
- Business
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Music
- Agricultural Science
- Art

St Patrick's College seeks to promote equality of opportunity throughout school life. As far as is practically possible the school will seek to facilitate students' choice of subjects/programmes, with consideration and regard for the following factors;

- The school's ability to offer a subject each year.
- The availability of teaching staff qualified to teach a particular subject.
- The demand for a subject relative to the cohort each year.
- The provision of a sufficient teaching allocation to provide the subject.

1.2. Extra-Curricular Activities

In the pursuit of developing and maintaining a holistic approach to education all students are encouraged to participate in all areas of school life, both in the classroom and beyond. A wide range of extracurricular activities is offered to students including; - sports, music, community involvement, school tours and public speaking, for example.

To ensure the care and safety of students, the Board of Management may, on occasion, limit numbers allowed on some tours/activities based on pre-determined criteria. In such cases students and parents/guardians may be informed of selection procedures prior to allocation of places. Examples of such events are outlined below.

<u>Sports</u>	<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gaelic Football,• Soccer• Athletics• Indoor Soccer• Table Tennis• Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School tours• Field trips• Team Building Activities• Drama/Musical• Horticulture• Community Events• Debating• An Gaisce

2. The School

2.1. St. Patrick's College

St. Patrick's College is a recognised school under the terms of the Education Act 1998 and operates within the regulations and guidelines laid down from time to time by the Department of Education & Skills.

St. Patrick's College follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 & 30 of the Education Act, 1998.

2.2 Patron and Body Corporate

Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB is the patron of St. Patrick's College, the employer of staff and the financial control agency of the school. St. Patrick's College operates within the legal framework, mission and aims of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB.

2.3 School Ethos

The school adheres to the regulations and guidelines laid down by Mayo, Sligo Leitrim ETB. The school promotes the inclusion of all and promises to protect the vulnerable from those who would oppress their opportunities to develop. The health, happiness and security of students will be prioritised.

2.4 School Mission Statement

St. Patrick's College is a co-educational school which aims to provide a broad education designed to help each pupil achieve their potential. Administrators and teachers see themselves as supporting the parents and guardians who are the primary educators of their children. The broad education offered strives towards not only academic achievements but the complete development of each pupil.

'We value respect, fair play and everyone's right to be himself or herself.

We aim to help our students to develop a sense of their own unique worth, and to respect the rights of others.

We strive for good relationships between our students, our staff and our parents.

We educate our students not only for now, but also for life.'

2.5 Key Values in this Admissions Policy

St. Patrick's College supports the following key values in the operation of the school:

- Quality of teaching and learning
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Respect parental/guardian choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for diversity in traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society
- Co-education
- The inclusive and communal nature of school life

2.6 Resources

St. Patrick's College is funded by Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB and the Department of Education & Skills. In the implementation of policies at the school due regard will be given to the resources available to the school in terms of accommodation and staffing.

3. Enrolment Process

3.1 According to Policy

Decisions in respect of the enrolment of students will be made by the Board of Management based on this policy. Operational elements in relation to enrolment are delegated to the Principal.

It is the responsibility of the applicant or parent/guardian to supply details relevant to the enrolment process.

3.2 Equal Status Act 2000 to 2004

The Board of Management will comply with the requirements of the Equal Status Act, 2000 and will not discriminate against applicants on the ground of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community.

3.3 Age

- Students will normally be required to be twelve (12) years of age or older in the year they apply for enrolment in the school.
- Where relevant all students will be placed in age appropriate year groups.

3.4 Completion of Sixth Class of the Primary School

Except in exceptional circumstances, students who have completed sixth class in Primary School in the catchment area will be enrolled on application in First Year programmes subject to a place being available and the age requirement being fulfilled at the request of the parents/guardians.

3.5 Guardianship

Applications to enrol in St. Patrick's College will not be accepted unless the enrolment forms are signed by the legal parents/guardians. By signing these enrolment forms, the parent/guardian agrees to abide by the policies of St. Patrick's College. Claims of legal guardianship will not be considered without documentary evidence. The onus is on the applicant's guardians to prove guardianship in cases where the names on the applicant's birth certificate do not correspond with the signatures on the application form. Except in exceptional circumstances, applications to enrol will not be accepted in cases where the legal guardians of the applicant do not reside within the catchment area of St. Patrick's College.

4. Application Procedures

4.1 Overview

These procedures are in accordance with the requirements of:

- The Education Act 1998
- The Education Welfare Act 2000
- The Equal Status Act 2000 & 2004

They are guided by the principles of:

- Inclusiveness
- Equality of access and participation
- Respect for diversity
- Openness, accountability and transparency

The mainstream first year enrolment period for each year opens in **January and closes in April**.

Applications received at other times will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

By accepting a place in St. Patrick's College, parents/guardians also agree to accept all current and future school policies.

4.2 Enrolment Forms/Enrolment Process

From January 2019 the enrolment process at St Patrick's College is as follows;

Stage One - National schools in the catchment area will be visited by staff of St. Patrick's College and Enrolment Forms will be distributed to sixth class students at this time.

Enrolment Forms will also be available from the school office during normal working hours.

Stage Two – An open day will be held for all potential students. This will be followed by an open night for parents/guardians and potential students.

Stage Three – Parents/Guardians complete the Application Form for Admission to St. Patrick's College. (Appendix 1)

Stage Four – The school informs all applicants of the status of their application by letter. (Appendix 2/3)

Stage Five – Parents/Guardians complete the Acceptance Form for Admission to St. Patrick's College. (Appendix 4)

Please note the following;

- Parents/guardians seeking to enrol their children must complete Enrolment Forms in full
- It is the responsibility of the applicant or parent/guardian to supply all details relevant to the enrolment process.
- The Board of Management of St. Patrick's College reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants who in the opinion of the Board will be detrimental to the effective management of the school and to the learning of students of the school.

4.3 Notification to Parents/Guardians

Decisions regarding enrolment will be notified to parents/guardians within 21 days after a parent/guardian has provided all relevant data as per Section 19, Education Welfare Act, 2000

The following factors will be considered in respect of applications:

- Class size.
- Availability of staff.
- Availability of appropriate accommodation.
- The rights and welfare of existing students and staff within the school
- The previous record of attendance and behaviour of the applicant.

4.4 Assessments/Testing

St Patrick's College wishes to assess the ability levels of all incoming students. The school uses the Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) for this purpose. Parents will be informed of arrangements for taking this assessment through their National Schools in May of each year. The school may also use other forms of assessment to help design educational programmes for incoming students.

4.5 Late Enrolment

New applicants to First Year who wish to enrol after the enrolment period has ended and prior to the commencement of the school term in August/September each year will only be accepted if there are exceptional or extenuating circumstances.

Once the school term has commenced, all applications for enrolment will be dealt with under the section relating to transferring students. Any student who wishes to enrol into 1st Year after the official first day of the school year must provide the school with the following:

- A letter from the parent/guardian outlining clearly the reason(s) for the late application
- A fully completed enrolment form.
- Copy of applicant's Birth Certificate.
- Two most recent academic and behaviour reports from the pupil's previous school
- A written reference of behaviour, attendance and performance from the Principal of the previous school.
- If the student has been excluded from a previous school a report outlining the reasons for the exclusion should be furnished.
- A statement on special needs, if relevant.
- An up-to-date psychological report, dated within four years of the application, if relevant.

4.6 Enrolment of Students with Special Educational Needs

St. Patrick's College welcomes applications from students with special education needs. This policy provides for the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in our mainstream programmes to the maximum extent feasible. The principles of inclusivity and integration underpin the admission policy of special education needs students in this school.

Where an applicant has recognised special educational needs, parents/guardians should make application in January preceding the September intake. All documentation must be presented to the school.

In some instances (e.g. where specialized equipment or alteration to the physical structure is required), it may be necessary for either the Board of Management, or the school management acting on behalf of the Board, to defer enrolment until relevant documentation is presented, or until appropriate support arrangements are in place to meet the special educational needs of the intending student. If the student does not reach the standard required to access the most basic programme in the school the application may be unsuccessful.

5. Transfers to St. Patrick's College

While it is appreciated that in certain exceptional circumstances transfers are unavoidable (e.g. a change of residence or a family moving into the area) as a matter of general policy transfers into the school are discouraged in the overall interests of the continuity of the student's education.

An application to transfer is defined as one from a student who has previously enrolled in another school in or outside the catchment area. In general, it is not the policy of the Board of Management to accept transfer applications mid-cycle from students previously enrolled in other local post-primary schools.

Applications from students wishing to transfer into the school should provide the following:

- A letter from the parent/guardian outlining clearly the reason(s) for the application
- A fully completed transfer form.
- Copy of applicant's Birth Certificate.
- Two most recent academic and behaviour reports from the pupil's previous school
- A written reference of behaviour, attendance and performance from the Principal of the previous school.
- If the student has been excluded from a previous school a detailed report outlining the reasons for the exclusion should be furnished to the school by the parent/guardian before the application is processed. A copy of the official letter of exclusion must be furnished to show the reasons for the exclusion. Without these reports the application is deemed incomplete.
- A statement on special needs, if relevant.
- An up-to-date psychological report, dated within four years of the application, if relevant.
- Junior Certificate results if relevant.

St. Patrick's College also reserves the right to request a reference from the authorities in previous school(s).

Having due regard to the statutory and constitutional rights of parents/guardians and their children, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse any application which might include but is not exclusively confined to the following:

- An established prior record of poor behaviour;
- Lack of adequate resources to cater for students' needs;

Applications to transfer into the school will be considered having regard to the overall wellbeing of existing pupils and the availability of physical space and resources. Following consideration by the Board of Management of individual applications to transfer into the school, where the Board has good grounds for forming the fair and reasonable opinion that it would not be in the best interests of the existing students and/or the applicant to accept such a transfer, it is the policy of the school to refuse to enrol such applicants.

Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of on-going disciplinary proceedings in another school which includes any on-going statutory procedures in accordance with the Education Act 1998 or The Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

In general, it is the policy of the Board of Management not to accept transfers mid-cycle during the school year. However, in the case of students whose family have moved into the catchment area, and who are not enrolled in another post primary school, applications will be considered.

The Application form must be completed in full.

St. Patrick's College reserves the right to request other details relevant to the enrolment process. Decisions will be notified to parents/guardians within 21 days after a parent/guardian has provided all relevant data as per Section 19, Education Welfare Act, 2000.

The following factors will be considered in respect of applications:

- Class size
- Availability of staff
- Availability of appropriate accommodation
- The rights of applicants
- The rights and welfare of existing students and staff within the school
- The educational attainment of the applicant having regard to the age appropriate programme which he/she wishes to enrol in
- The record of attendance and behaviour of the applicant in his/her previous school

6. Transition Year

St. Patrick's College offers Transition Year as an optional one-year programme post Junior Cycle. The aims of the Transition Year Programme reflect those specific to the guidelines published by the Department of Education and Skills, namely:

- Education for maturity with the emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence.
- The promotion of general, technical and academic skills with the emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning.
- Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.

The Transition Year Programme in St. Patrick's College is not compulsory. The maximum number of available places will be dependent upon staffing, facilities and resources and will be determined annually by the Board of Management.

7. Further Information

7.1 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, a student with ‘special educational needs’ is a student who, because of attributes arising from a disability and/or learning difficulty, is unable to benefit from an ordinary school programme totally or in part without special interventions and/or other special education services.

Students who have been in receipt of special education programmes or services immediately prior to the application to enrol will be deemed to have special educational needs.

Students whose parent/guardians claim them to have need of special education services will be deemed to have special education needs for the purposes of the application to enrol.

Students who in the view of the school, formed based on assessments carried out by the school and/or on information provided on application, are deemed to be students with special education needs, and shall be so treated under the terms of this application process. This will be measured by staff who are experienced in the area of SEN using appropriate methods.

Students who are non-nationals or the children of non-nationals and, in the view of the school following interview and/or assessment, would be unable because of their level of English language competence to follow the programme of the school, will be deemed to have special education needs. Every effort will be made to place students in age appropriate classes.

7.2 Early Application

It is the policy of St. Patrick’s College to try to identify at an early stage of the admissions process students who may have special education needs. The school will make every effort to become familiar with these needs and to make the necessary arrangements to meet them. The school may request to access the student’s records from Primary school/ individual learning programme.

The school management or designated teachers will arrange for such meetings as are necessary to discuss the student’s needs and the capacity of the school to meet these needs, with the parents/guardians.

In some cases, it may be necessary to arrange for a case conference with all the professionals working with the student and their family.

The staff and Board of Management will do all it possibly can to identify, plan and provide for a child with special educational needs seeking admission to the school.

Decisions on such applications will normally be made within 21 days of all the required information being made available to the school.

7.3 Information on Special Education Needs

Parents/guardians will be required to provide information on educational, medical or psychological reports relevant to the education of the student. Parents/guardians will be required to provide written information on the education plan or programme being provided for the student prior to their application for enrolment. Lack of information or failure to provide required reports may be a basis for a decision to defer the commencement of the educational programme for the student at the school.

If the student has not to date been formally assessed by an appropriate professional, written consent of parents/guardians for the student to be assessed, may be required. The school may not accept responsibility for costs associated with such assessments as may be required.

7.4 Resources

Requests to Department of Education and Skills for resources for students with disabilities or special education needs will be made by the Mayo, Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board designated officer, (Director of Schools) on behalf of the school in accordance with the procedures of the Department of Education and Science.

7.5 Deferred Enrolment

Commencement of an educational programme and attendance at the school for a student with special education needs will be subject to the availability of the requisite resources at the school for the appropriate education programme of the student relevant to his/her disability or special needs, and the support services required.

The Board of Management reserves the right to defer commencement of an educational programme and the attendance of an applicant at the school pending receipt of the resources required for the special education needs of the student.

In such circumstances, the school will make every effort to arrange for any compensatory programme which will be required so that the student can benefit fully from the programme of education to be provided at the school.

The Board of Management may also defer enrolment under Section 4.6 of this policy pending a fully completed application form and the failure of the applicant to supply the school with all relevant material.

It is the responsibility of the applicant or parent/guardian to supply details relevant to the enrolment process.

8. Code of Behaviour

All students and their parents/guardians will be required to sign and return a document with the application form indicating that they have read and accept the schools Code of Behaviour. ***Enrolment is subject to this requirement.*** It is the policy of St. Patrick's College to uphold the Code of Behaviour.

Please refer to our Policy: Code of Behaviour for further information.

9. Reserved rights of the Board of Management to refuse enrolment

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application to enrol in the school, where in the opinion of the board, adequate physical accommodation is not available for the applicant.

The Board of management reserves the right to refuse an application to enrol in the school where, in the opinion of the Board, a decision to enrol would constitute a risk to the health and safety of other students.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application to enrol in the school where, in the opinion of the Board, the school programme is unsuitable to the educational standard and needs of the student and suitable arrangements for an appropriate programme cannot reasonably be made at the school.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse or to defer enrolment in the school where it is not satisfied that it has sufficient information to make an informed decision on the educational needs of the student.

10. Right to appeal to Mayo, Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board

Under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, Parents/guardians have the right to appeal a refusal by the school to enrol a student. A decision of the Board of Management may be appealed to Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim Education and Training Board, in accordance with Department of Education and Science Circular M 48/01.

In a letter to parents/guardians refusing enrolment, this right will be stated, and the relevant form made available.

11. Declaration

This St. Patrick's College Policy was formed following consultation with all staff, members of the Board of Management, Parents and the Student Council. It is recommended that this policy be reviewed every three years or whenever it is deemed necessary by School Management. It was adopted by the Board of Management of St. Patrick's College on:

Signed: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Board Secretary & School Principal (Acting)

Date: _____