

Admission Policy

Introduction

This Admission Policy should be read in conjunction with the Ethos Statement of Ashton School and the Ashton Code of Behaviour and Discipline.

The process described hereunder is that used for the enrolment of First Year students as they progress from primary to secondary school. The process for other enrolments is described in the final section of the policy.

Process

1. In order to comply with statutory requirements, the enrolment of a student at Ashton School takes place in five stages. The stages are:
 - 1) Notification of Intention to Apply
 - 2) Ashton Open Day and visit to school
 - 3) Formal Application
 - 4) Offer of a Place
 - 5) Registration
2. Only application on approved forms will be eligible for consideration.
3. All applicants for First Year must have attained their twelfth birthday by 31 December in the year of enrolment.

Stage 1: Notification of Intention to Apply

1. The process begins by completing a Notification of Intention to Apply Form.
2. Parents or guardians should contact Ashton School, Blackrock Road, Cork and request a Notification of Intention to Apply Form as soon as practicable, ideally, no later than 31 July in the year preceding admission (13 months prior to the proposed start date at Ashton).
3. Ashton School will issue a receipt of a completed Notification of Intention to Apply Form.
4. It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to notify subsequent changes of address or other contact information to Ashton School.

Stage 2: Ashton Open Day/Visit to the School

1. Each parent/guardian and applicant pupil who has returned a Notification of Intention to Apply Form will be invited to attend Ashton Open Day.
2. Each parent/guardian and applicant pupil is required subsequently to visit the School and to meet with the Principal or his representative, either individually or in groups, as determined by the Principal.
3. All applicants will have visited Ashton School by the conclusion of Stage 3.

Stage 3: Formal Application

1. During the months of July, August and September in the year preceding enrolment those who have returned a Notification of Intention to Apply Form will be sent an Application Form. The deadline for return of this Application Form will be 30 September.
2. The Application Form should be completed legibly and fully. Only applications which have been fully completed and signed will be considered.
3. A non-refundable administration charge of €20 per application should be returned with each submitted Application Form.
4. Completed and signed Application Forms (including any requested accompanying documentation) must be received in the School Office no later than the notified deadline in the year preceding enrolment. This is when the application/decision making process begins formally for all applicants.
5. Ashton School will issue a written receipt of a completed Application Form.
6. It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to notify subsequent changes of address or other contact information to Ashton School.
7. Completion of an Application Form is not a guarantee of a place in Ashton School.
8. The application stage will conclude on 21 October in the year preceding enrolment.
9. Applications, except in a case of change of residence, are not generally entertained in the course of the school year.

Stage 4: Offer of a Place

1. The Board of Management will respond to all applications as soon as practicable after 30 September and in any event on or before 21 October.
2. A waiting list may be drawn up. Unsuccessful candidates will be invited to indicate within a given timeframe that they wish to be placed on a waiting list. The list will be prioritised according to the priorities described under the section headed “Criteria”. Where order of priority is not specified within a criterion, the priority given to applicants on the waiting list satisfying a particular criterion will be decided by lot. The waiting list ends on the day prior to the first day of the first term of the year of entry.
3. A subsequent review of a decision by the Board of Management may be requested, generally on grounds only of additional information not previously submitted at the time of application, and would be considered at the next meeting of the Board.
4. In accordance with Section 29 (1) (c) of the Education Act 1998 the parents/guardians of an unsuccessful applicant may appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.
5. While Ashton School is committed to meeting the identified requirements of applicants who have a disability or who have other special educational needs, the school reserves the right to enrol such applicants only in cases where it is satisfied, having regard to the resources available to Ashton School at the time of application/proposed date of enrolment, that the provision of education appropriate to their abilities and needs is practicable. (Ref. Education Act 1998 s 6 (a) and (b) and s 9).

Stage 5: Registration

1. Applicants who are offered places at Ashton School are required to register (complete and return the registration form) within the timeframe specified with the offer of the place.
2. A non-refundable payment of €150 towards the cost of class materials is payable.

3. Completion and return of a Registration Form together with payment of €150 towards the cost of class materials guarantee a place at Ashton School for the specific year of application/offer.
4. At the time of registration parents/guardians are required to declare that they have read and understand both the Ethos Statement and the Code of Behaviour and Discipline, and that they undertake to support Ashton School in their implementation.

Criteria

The Board of Management will, in the light of sections 6(e), 9(m) and 15(2)(d) of the Education Act 1998, give consideration to the following factors:

- Whether an applicant and his/her parents/guardians are sympathetic to the ethos of Ashton School.
- The number of available places in Ashton, which in turn involves:
 - The deployment of teachers
 - The resources of the school
- Religious denomination (as outlined in Section 1 below) as based on the foundation and Ethos Statement of Ashton School and as advised by the Religious Nominating Authority (the Church of Ireland Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross);

Places will be allocated to applicants who show sympathy to the ethos and traditions of the school. Where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, priority will be given to applicants satisfying criterion 1, 2, 3, 4 etc. in that order. Where it is not possible to offer places to all applicants satisfying a particular criterion and where order of priority is not specified within the criterion the priority given to applicants satisfying the criterion will be decided by lot.

In allocating places the following priority is followed:

1. Applicants who are members of the Church of Ireland (or other Anglican/Episcopalian Churches) or members of Churches which are full ecumenical partners of the Church of Ireland (member churches of the Irish Council of Churches, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or Conference of European Churches) i.e. Belgian/French/Dutch Reformed Church, Congregational Federation, Lutheran Church,¹ Methodist Church, Moravian Church, Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Old Catholic Church, Orthodox Churches, Presbyterian Church, Religious Society of Friends, the Salvation Army and the United Reformed Church (verification details required on application form).
2. Applicants where one or both parents are members of churches listed above (verification details required on application form).
3. Siblings of children who are already enrolled in the school for the proposed year of entry of the applicant and children of staff of the school.
4. Applicants who are members of Protestant Churches other than those listed above.
5. Applicants attending a Church of Ireland Primary School.
6. Siblings of past pupils
7. Applicants where there is a long established association with, connection to and support of Ashton School.
8. Children of past pupils.
9. Other applicants having regard to (i) sympathy of applicant and his/her parents/guardians to the school ethos, and (ii) gender balance in the school.

¹ Children of Porvoo Churches i.e. the Lutheran Churches of Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Finland, Estonia and Lithuania since 1996 are full members of the Church of Ireland when resident in Ireland. The term "Church of Ireland" should be taken to include them in this enrolment policy.

Enrolments other than the progression from primary to secondary school

The Board of Management will decide on admission to any year other than first year by applying the following policy.

Each parent/guardian and applicant pupil will be required to visit the school and meet with the Principal or his nominee.

In considering the application, the Principal will take into account the availability of an appropriate place in the school, class sizes, availability of staff, resources of the school and whether or not a student is currently on the register of another school. Taking these factors into account the Principal will assess whether or not in his opinion a proposed admission:

- Complies with the criteria of the school's Admission Policy.
- Is in the best interest of the applicant.
- Is in the best interest of the School.

Provided that:

- All information relevant to the application is made available.
- A consultation takes place, if necessary, with the Educational Welfare Officer.

Based on the foregoing, the Principal will recommend to the Board whether or not a place should be offered to the applicant.

The Board of Management may delegate the responsibility to its chairperson to make a decision on the Principal's recommendation on behalf of the Board so that applications can be processed in a timely fashion.

Board of Management
June 2016