ST MARY'S COLLEGE C.S.Sp.

Rathmines,
Dublin 6.
Roll number 60560E
Patron: Spiritan Education Trust

ADMISSIONS POLICY & ANNUAL NOTICE FOR 2027/28

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 board of management 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 [date]. 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 St Mary's College admission process are set out in the school's annual admission 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 admission 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

St Mary's College CSSp is a Catholic all boys fee-charging voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Spiritan Education Trust.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

(a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and

(b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and

(c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and

(d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St Mary's College 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.

EDUCATION IN THE MISSION OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Congregation of the Holy Spirit is an international missionary congregation founded in 1703 by Claude Poullart des Places (1679 – 1709). We also look to Francis Libermann (1802 – 1852) as an important founding figure in the evolving history of the Congregation. Our mission, from the very beginning, has been to seek a value-led life in the service of the Gospel of Jesus.

By seeking to live a life of **Openness to the Spirit, Spiritans** have always understood education to be at the heart of our service to Church and society. Spiritans and Spiritan initiatives are present in every continent at the service of education.

Our works of education are varied but they are all born out of a sense of building up a **Community of Concern** for others. At the heart of our schools we wish to foster this sense of community among students, staff, parents and management where the gifts and faith of each person are recognised in their diversity and their richness.

Above all we seek to inspire in the students who have been entrusted to our care to make an **Option for the Marginalised and Economically Poor in society** as well as a **Commitment to Service** where each person is encouraged to use and share their talents generously to build up a more just society and to practice a life modelled on the values of the Gospel.

For over three hundred years Spiritans have been engaged in mission and service across the globe. We work with people of all faiths and none in a dialogue based on respect and trust knowing that men and women can live, work and learn together in a spirit of mutual respect. We see education as playing a vital role in the development and growth of a democratic society. This is the **Global Vision** that invites us to see beyond the limits of our local and international frontiers and to cherish the fact that, despite our cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, we share a common human destiny where we live in the shelter of each other.

Claude Poullart des Places was himself a student when he brought together his other companions whose common commitment to Gospel living formed the beginnings of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. As students, they were committed to working and achieving the **Highest of Educational Standards** in the life of their student community and growing in knowledge and awareness of themselves and of God in their own **Personal and Faith Formation**.

SPIRITAN EDUCATION TRUST

The Spiritan Education Trust is a company limited by guarantee set up in 1999 by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit designated to act as Patron of the Spiritan schools in Ireland.

Up to that time, the official Patron was the Provincial Superior of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit in Ireland, assisted by the Provincial Council.

ST MARY'S COLLEGE RATHMINES

St. Mary's College was established in 1890 by the Holy Ghost (Spiritan) Order at the request of the Archbishop of Dublin and the people of Rathmines. The College comprises two schools, under separate principals and Boards of Management.

Faithful to the traditions of the Founders in 1890, the College provides an environment of faith and learning which fosters idealism, inspires hearts and informs minds to know and value what is right.

St Mary's College Senior School has a tight-knit sense of community and shared values. Its mission and objectives are based on Gospel values, respect for each individual and for the common good, and a commitment to the search for truth and the development of the whole person. The College's characteristics include being a school where everybody knows everybody else, and a school which has a strong focus on academic achievement where students are encouraged to achieve the highest educational standards. The school also has a proud tradition and heritage in the provision of extensive extra-curricular, sporting and cultural activities that seek to develop the whole person. The College seeks to encourage a culture of respect, generosity, justice, hospitality and critical reflection. As a missionary school the College maintains strong links to the developing world.

3. Admission Statement

St Mary's College 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,
(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.

St Mary's College is an all-boys school and does not discriminate when it refuses to admit a female student applying for admission to this school.

St Mary's College will cooperate 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 Mary's College 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.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school

Provision for special education needs is arranged using the NEPS model of continuum of support.

Support for all includes all students in terms of classroom planning and differentiation & AFL; also study and organisation skills. Information is gathered from tracking of student exam outcomes; teacher observation (classwork, homework, exams etc); and briefing from SEN department based on reports from Educational Psychologists or Occupational Therapists.

Support for some includes literacy and/ or organisational intervention for Irish exemptions; Literacy & organisation for continental language exemptions, all a subset of the Irish exemption group; alternative exam centres; for some, increased use of ICT in class, eg homework on computer; additional pastoral care supports; daily progress and homework report on occasional basis.

In addition, a number have had Ed Psych or OT reports and receive in-class support monitoring by the SEN Department:

Support for a few includes additional degree of monitoring (usually daily); individual pastoral support from guidance counsellors and SEN Dept.

Extra provision for students who are exceptionally able or gifted includes

- Children are given tests of academic potential in Sixth Class, GRT in First Year, DATS in Fourth Year.
- Teachers briefed at year meetings on students with high potential.
- Parents of able/ gifted students briefed
- Exam performance tracked, ranked and cross-referenced to tests of academic potential.
- Differentiation/ Assessment of and for Learning
- External competitions such as Young Scientists
- Option to study three languages simultaneously: Irish, French, German. Language orals pre-school.
- Debating coaching in English & Irish
- Subject provision in STEM subjects: At leaving cert, all three science subjects, plus Applied Maths & Technology.

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 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) St Mary's College provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

6. 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 admission notice.

1. Pupils of St Mary's College CSSp Junior School whose fees are up-to-date.
2. Students who enter as part of the designated bursary scheme.
3. Brothers of present and past pupils of St Mary's College CSSp Senior School.
4. Sons of current teaching staff members.
5. Nephews, great nephews and first cousins of members of the Spiritan Congregation.
6. Sons and grandsons of past pupils of St. Mary's provided the maximum number of places filled pursuant to that criterion does not exceed 25 per cent of the available places as set out in the school's annual admission notice for the school year concerned.
7. Other applications received in the annual application window, as outlined in the admissions notice. Applications received outside of this time period are not included.

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), a lottery will apply.

7. 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) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;

(c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;

(d) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;

(e) 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 the provisions set out in Section 6 above.

(f) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school, subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned, and also to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists up until 31st January 2025 only.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St Mary's College will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see section 14 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 make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

9. 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St Mary's College, you must indicate—

(i) In writing acceptance or otherwise within 10 school days of the posting of the offer, along with a non-refundable deposit of €1,500 (to be set against fees for the coming year). Failure to comply with this will result in the offer being withdrawn.

(ii) 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.

2. 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 3. 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.

11. 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 St Mary's College 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 admission 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 10 above.

(V) The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

12. 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 board of management with 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).

13. 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 St Mary's College 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 St Mary's College 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.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission 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.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

Where parents wish to make an application for their son to a year group other than First Year or during the school year, they should in the first instance fill in an Application Form. An offer of a place can only be made if there is space in the year group in question. A decision on whether a place can be offered will be conveyed to the parents within 21 days of the initial application.
Before accepting the offer of a place in the school the parents and their son are strongly advised to attend a meeting with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal to ascertain whether there is a place available in the particular subject classes required by their son. The fact that there may be a space in a year group would not automatically mean that there is a place available in a particular subject class at the level required by the student. This is because class size is limited in certain subjects. Parents should also establish the curricular provision, subject choices/levels and facilities available at the time.

Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant to a year group other than First Year or during the school year:

The parents must confirm their acceptance in writing of an offer of a place within two weeks of the date of the offer of a place.

In accepting an offer of admission from St Mary's College, the parents must indicate—

(i) whether or not they have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If they have accepted such an offer, they must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not they have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, they must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

Parents 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.

Circumstances in which offers of a place in a year group other than First Year or during the school year may not be made or may be withdrawn:

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by St Mary's College 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 within two weeks of the date of the offer of a place;
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;
IV. an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out above;
V. The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to

provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

Oversubscription to the year group other than First Year:

In the event of there being more applications to the year group other than First Year than places available, a waiting list of students, whose application for admission to the particular year group has been refused, will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list will be in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy see Section 5 above. The date of receipt of a properly completed Application Form will determine the position on this waiting list within each of the criteria. In the unlikely event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories set out in Section 5 above, then the position on the waiting list (for places in a year group other than First year) will be determined by a lottery process.

Offers of any subsequent places in the year group other than First Year that become available during the school year 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.

Sharing of Data with other schools:

Applicants should note that the provisions of Section 11 above relating to the sharing of data with other schools will apply in all cases where an application is made to a year group other than First Year or during the school year.

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

The board of St Mary's College 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The environment and organisation of daily life in St Mary's reflects its place within the Catholic tradition of education. There is religious education within the class timetable, by way of the national Junior Cycle programme for RE from First – Third Year, and non-exam RE from Fourth – Sixth Year which includes Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE). Students are given the opportunity for faith-in-action through works in the community, some of which take place within the timetabled day. There is a system of supports to the Catholic faith life including liturgies to mark points of the church calendar such as Advent & Lent, the sacraments of the Eucharist and of Reconciliation, and annual retreats. Teachers may choose to lead a class prayer to start the class. Families and boys are invited to Mass and/ or other liturgies to mark milestones such as starting First Year and completing Sixth Year.

The following arrangements are in place for students who do not partake in specific religious events:

1. All students follow the Junior Cycle RE programme and attend Senior Cycle RE classes.
2. All students do work in the community as timetabled in Fourth Year.

3. All students are invited to attend the annual retreats, which take place instead of classes. If excused, they may remain at home or come to school, where they will be work on their other subjects. Alternative tuition is not provided.
4. When a teacher is leading a prayer to begin a class, or there is a liturgy in an exam hall or school assembly to mark occasions such as Advent, students *de facto* are making their own choices as to whether they are participating. On such occasions, the norms of courtesy guide individuals who are attending a prayer service which is not of their faith. When a sacramental service is offered to a group, students may be excused attendance by prior arrangement. The school will provide supervision but not alternative tuition during this time.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

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. A request for a review must be received by the school within 7 days of the refusal of admission.
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 board of management 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 board of management 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 Board of Management)
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 board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)
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.

Appendix 2

ST MARY'S COLLEGE

ANNUAL ADMISSION NOTICE FOR 2027/28

The Application Form for Admission is online and available from 1st October 2026 at www.stmarys.ie.

Copies of the school's Admission Policy can be read on www.stmarys.ie or by writing to Admissions, St Mary's College, Rathmines, Dublin 6.

1. Application and Decision Dates for admission to 1st Year for 2027/28

1.	The school will commence accepting applications for admission on	**1 October 2026**
2.	The school will cease accepting applications for admission on	**22 October 2026**
3.	Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision on their application by	**12 November 2026**
4.	Applicants must confirm acceptance of an offer of admission by	**26 November 2026**

3. Number of places being made available in the 2027/28 school year

The number of places being made available in 1st year is	**96**

4. Number of places in 1st year for the 2027/28 school year which were offered and accepted before 1 February 2020

The number of places for 1st year that were offered and accepted prior to the coming into operation of section 62 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 on 1 February 2020	**0**

5. Breakdown of applications in the previous year (only required if the school was oversubscribed in the previous year)

The total number of applications for admission received by the school for admission in 1st year in the 2025/26 school year was xxx

Breakdown of places allocated for 1st Year for the 2026/27 school year:	
Number of places available	96
Number of applications received	299
Offers made and accepted under each criteria. Please note that the criteria for 2025-26 are different than for 2024-25.	Criteria 1. 52 (Pupils of the College's own Junior School whose fees are up-to-date.) Category 2. Bursary. 0 Criteria 3. 9 (Brothers of present and past pupils.) Criteria 4. 0 (Sons of current teaching staff members.) Criteria 5. 1 (Nephews, great nephews and cousins of members of the Spiritan Congregation.) Criteria 6. 7 (Sons and grandsons of past pupils of St. Mary's provided the maximum number of places filled pursuant to that criterion does not exceed 25 per cent of the available places as set out in the school's annual admission notice for the school year concerned.) Criteria 7. Zero
Number of names placed on waiting list for the school year concerned	203