



Blackrock College

Admission Policy

Review Dates

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| STAFF MEETING | 29th November 2022 | Approved |
| PARENTS' COUNCIL | 30th November 2022 | Approved |
| STUDENTS' COUNCIL | 1st December 2022 | Approved |
| BOM | December 2022 | Final |

Next review date:

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Introduction

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.

Blackrock College, a Spiritan College founded in 1860 for boys, is owned by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, known as Spiritans, under the patronage of the Spiritan Education Trust.

We aim to support Parents in their responsibility for the spiritual, religious, moral, academic and physical needs of their children.

The rules and policies of the College create a community environment in which each student can develop his full human and spiritual potential. They ensure a high standard of behaviour in the community and encourage courtesy and consideration for all.

We believe that education flourishes in an environment where good relationships are encouraged, where people feel valued and respected and where there is a genuine tolerance, fairness and support for all. Blackrock College pupils' conduct should always be governed by consideration for others.

Against a background of the educational philosophy of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit in Ireland (reference www.spiritaneducation.ie), Blackrock College aims to provide an environment in which:

- ♦ Faith is nurtured.
- ♦ Pupils can develop their full potential.
- ♦ Personal responsibility is promoted.
- ♦ Pupils are prepared for an appropriate career.
- ♦ Pupils are made aware of their cultural heritage.
- ♦ Parental collaboration is promoted and encouraged.

**Each pupil is entitled to an education free from fear and intimidation.
Bullying is not tolerated in Blackrock College.**

Blackrock College is a recognised Voluntary Secondary School for boys, providing Junior Certificate, Transition Year (which is compulsory) and Leaving Certificate as prescribed by the D.E.S. which may be amended in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998). Blackrock is a mixed ability school with a total enrolment in excess of 1,000 pupils including 90 Boarders.

There are ninety full time and three part time staff members directly involved in the educational provision - Teachers, Counsellors, Chaplains, Additional Needs, IT, Games and Arts personnel. The D.E.S. fund staff members based on the pupil-teacher ratio of the day plus 4 ex-quota posts. A support staff, forty-eight full time and twenty-three part time, are involved in administration, maintenance, medical, catering, accommodation, and grounds.

1. Applications for Admission

Applications for admission to Blackrock should be made online or in writing to The Registrar. The application date for the succeeding school year will be published annually, no earlier than 1st October. Applications will not be accepted prior to that date.

The application form will request personal details including (i) name/address of boy and parents/guardians, (ii) date of birth, (iii) contact telephone numbers/e-mail address, (iv) details of any medical/psychological condition, (v) religion, (vi) previous schools attended.

Applications for Boarding will be accepted two years in advance of the proposed commencement.

2. Admission Statement

Blackrock 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, (a) 'gender ground', (b) 'civil status ground', (c) 'family status ground', (d) 'sexual orientation ground', (e) 'religions ground', (f) 'disability ground', (g) 'ground of race', (h) 'Traveller community ground' and (i) 'special education needs', shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Blackrock College will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation 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."

Blackrock College will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

However, Blackrock College is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission.

The objective of Blackrock College is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Blackrock College shall admit each male student seeking admission except where

- a) The school is oversubscribed (please see Order of Priority below for further detail)
- 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 them and that he/she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the school.
- c) Blackrock College is a Roman Catholic school and may refuse to admit a student a boy who is not Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

3. Decisions on Applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Blackrock College will be based on the following:

- Our admission policy
- The 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

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.

4. Allocation of Places – General

Willow Park 1st Year has priority as the main feeder school for the College. The pupils of Willow Park 1st Year transfer to 2nd Year in the College subject to suitability. Other places are offered as per the 'Order of Priority' if available. Boys who have applied and have not received an offer remain on a waiting list.

It is expected that parents who enrol their sons commit to supporting the College ethos as stated in the Mission Statement and continue to do so while their son(s) is (are) at the College.

Blackrock College is a Catholic school. Priority is given to boys of the Catholic Faith. The College considers the applications of those from other faiths when they are willing to support the ethos of the College.

5. Order of Priority in Admission to the College

1. Pupils of Willow Park 1st Year
2. Brothers of existing pupils and past pupils
3. Sons of staff members of a minimum of four years standing and nephews/grand-nephews of members of the Spiritan Community
4. Beneficiaries of the Blackrock College Bursary Programme
5. Sons of past pupils of the College
6. Grandsons of past-pupils of the College (Point 5 & 6 are jointly up to a maximum of 25%)
7. By Lottery

Note:

- (i) There is specific provision for Boarders with up to 14 reserved places in 2nd Year.
- (ii) Those who have applied for specific year groups up to and including 2025/26 prior to February 1st 2020 remain on the waiting list.
- (iii) If there is an ex-aequo in 3 to 6, a lottery will decide.

5.1 Willow Park Secondary

Willow Park first year is situated in the Willow Park area of the campus. This facilitates an unique inductive process allowing the pupils to adjust to their new subjects, range of teachers and the challenges of secondary education in a self-contained milieu before transferring to the College for second year.

Willow Park First Year is a recognised secondary school and has its own dedicated administrative structure, specialist secondary teachers, counsellors, chaplain and games staff providing the necessary attention, care and concern for the boys.

6. What will not be considered or taken into account in relation to admission

In accordance with section 62(7)€ 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) financial contributions to the school other than payment of the annual fees;
- c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- d) the occupations, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- e) a requirement that a student, or his parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission other than in the case of admission to the Hall of Residence;
- f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his family attending or having previously attended the school; other than those listed in section 5, the 'order of priority' in admission to the College;
- g) 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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

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

Pupils transferring to other years may do so subject to availability of a place and D.E.S. approval. There are reserved places for boarders in each year group. 2nd Year – 14; 3rd Year – 14; 4th Year – 16; 5th Year and 6th Year-24 places. All applications should be made online or in writing to the Registrar. Information concerning previous attendance and the pupil's educational progress to date and the reasons for the proposed transfer will be required in accordance with the Education Welfare Act. An interview will be requested. A waiting list will be established and as places become available, having assessed suitability. offers will be made in accordance with the priority list.

7.2 Procedures in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted, after the commencement of the school year

The procedures in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

If a place has become available and the waiting list has been exhausted, an offer may be made to an applicant after the commencement of the school year.

Note:

With regard to 7.1 and 7.2 above 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.

8. 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, 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 13 & 14 below).

8.1 Acceptance of an Offer of a Place by an Applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Blackrock College, you must indicate—

- (i) 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.

8.2 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 Blackrock College where—

- a) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- b) 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.
- c) the parent/guardian 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
- d) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.
- e) The guardian/parent fails to pay the deposit, 50% of the fee, within the acceptance time framework.

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.

9. 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—

- 1) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- 2) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- 3) 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;
- ii. the date on which an offer of admission was made;
- iii. the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- iv. a student's personal details including his name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

10. 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 Blackrock 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 Blackrock College is in the order of priority assigned to the student's application 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.

11. 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 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.

12. Religion at Blackrock

Blackrock College, as part of its programme of core subjects, provides Junior Cycle Religious Education (R.E.) for all our students as prescribed by the D.E.S.

R.E. makes a distinctive contribution to the Transition and Senior Cycle years by developing the boys' knowledge and understanding of religion, religious beliefs, practice, language and traditions and their influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. This is an essential part of the holistic development of the boys alongside S.P.H.E. and R.S.E. Each of these programmes are compulsory.

Parents and students are informed of this at enrolment and in the school contract. Withdrawal of a student from liturgical ceremonies is only facilitated after a parental, or in the case of a student who has reached 18 years of age the student's, written request and a discussion with school management. Arrangements agreed upon must facilitate the student's spiritual and moral growth.

13. 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.

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.

14. 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.

Policy Name: **Admission Policy.**

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management on **Tuesday, 13th December 2022.**

Signed:


Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed:


Secretary, Board of Management