



# ALEXANDRA COLLEGE

## DUBLIN

### **Alexandra College Senior School Admissions Policy**

#### **1. Introductory Statement and Rationale**

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Equal Status Act 2000 and in compliance with the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018, the Board of Management of Alexandra College has adopted and the Council has approved this written Admissions Policy.

#### **2. The characteristic spirit and objectives of Alexandra College**

Alexandra College is a voluntary independent not-for-profit day and boarding school for girls. Alexandra College is a vibrant, inclusive learning community made up of students and teachers from all over Ireland and from around the world.

This admissions policy aligns with the characteristic spirit of the school which is set out in our ethos, mission and our values. It is expected that all prospective and current students and their families will subscribe to and support the ethos and mission of the College.

Since 1866, Alexandra College has been educating, inspiring and championing outward-looking women of character in a Church of Ireland ethos, influenced by the Quaker values of our founder.

The strong link between the College and the Church of Ireland is reflected in our ethos statement, our constitution and in this policy. The Archbishop is the chairman of the College Council.

The Board of Management of Alexandra College upholds, and is accountable to the patron for upholding, the characteristic spirit of the College 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 College.

#### **Our Ethos**

We educate our students in a Church of Ireland ethos, influenced by the Quaker values of our founder Anne Jellicoe. We welcome students of all faiths and of none. From our ethos we derive our values.

#### **Our Values**

Our core values are derived from the Quaker values of our founder, Anne Jellicoe. They are a daily commitment to a way of being in the world. Together, they provide a framework to help us to think clearly, behave positively, reach sound decisions, be well, and contribute to the development and wellness of others.

### **Our Mission:**

Alexandra College aims to provide education in an environment which promotes a Church of Ireland ethos influenced by the Quaker values of our founder.

We are committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive learning environment in which every girl is enabled to know her worth, see the worth of others, and to live each school day well, for her good and for the common good.

It is our hope that every student leaves this College equipped to continue her lifelong learning process joyfully, to carve her own path, to make and sustain relationships, and to make her particular positive contribution to society.

Achievement of our mission requires the full support, engagement and day to day commitment of the whole school community.

### **3. Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly the characteristic spirit, ethos, objectives, the admissions policy and procedures of the College.

The policy ensures that the College serves any student from the Church of Ireland and wider Protestant community who is seeking admission to a school that provides education consistent with that faith, while also creating an inclusive, welcoming and vibrant learning community to girls of all faiths and none.

The College supports the principles of inclusiveness, equality of access and participation in the school and parental choice, and takes into account the rights of the Patron, as set out in the Education Act as well as the funding and resources available to the College.

### **4. Scope of the Policy**

While the same admissions and priority criteria apply to Alexandra College Junior School and Alexandra Pre-School, this policy applies only to the secondary school.

### **5. Admission Statement**

The College shall admit each student seeking admission to the College other than where the school is oversubscribed or in the circumstances set out in section 12 below.

The College does not discriminate in its admissions policy or procedures or in the implementation of those policies and procedures on any grounds. In particular, and by reference to section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000, Alexandra College will

not discriminate in admission of a student to the College on the grounds of the gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, race, disability, membership of the Traveller community or special educational needs of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned.

Alexandra College is a school for girls. The College does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of that gender.

Alexandra College aims to provide education in an environment which promotes a Church Of Ireland ethos and Quaker values and does not discriminate where it:

1. admits as a student a person who is a member of or is raised by a parent who is a member of the Church of Ireland or of a church which is a full ecumenical partner of the Church of Ireland or of a recognised reformed tradition within the Christian Church in preference to others; or
2. refuses to admit as a student a person who is not a member of nor is raised by a parent who is a member of the Church of Ireland nor of a church which is a full ecumenical partner of the Church of Ireland nor of a recognised reformed tradition within the Christian Church and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

## **6. Boarding and Day School**

Alexandra College is a boarding and day school. In accordance with Section 6(e) of the Education Act 1998 and to ensure effective use of resources, it is the policy of the College to fill all boarding places before filling day places.

Applications which do not indicate a genuine requirement for boarding will be disregarded. A genuine requirement for boarding would be demonstrated by residence an appropriate distance from the college, overseas residence or specific demonstrable domestic circumstances. The College may interview applicants and their parents/guardians to assess suitability of boarding school for the student and whether there is a genuine requirement for boarding.

Any offer of admission to a boarding place in the College is conditional on the student's parent undertaking that a boarding place rather than a day place is required.

A student who enrolls as a boarding student, is not guaranteed a place as a day student in subsequent years. Available day places will be allocated each year in accordance with the priority criteria set out at section 10 below.

## **7. Capacity and resources**

Alexandra College is a fee-paying school and in addition to such funding as is provided by the Department of Education and Skills towards the hiring of teachers, the finances of the school are provided by fees and by contributions from the

school community.

The Board of Management operates a development programme to maintain, improve and develop facilities on the campus. All incoming and existing parents are invited to participate in the development programme.

Scholarships are an important way for the College to realise its mission of creating and maintaining an inclusive learning environment. As part of the College's strategic plan, in line with the mission and ethos of Alexandra College, and subject to funding, the College aims to increase access scholarship students to 20% of secondary school students. The board will take this into account in deciding how many places will be made available by the College in each intake group.

The College has limited capacity, funding and resources. To ensure that the College can provide a holistic education to each student in line with the College's educational philosophy, and mindful of its obligations in terms of the health and safety of students, the College will not admit more students than its current capacity and resources can facilitate. The board will take this into account in deciding how many places will be made available by the College in each intake group.

## **8. Application for Admissions Procedure for entry to First Year**

1. In March of each year, or at such other time as the Board deems convenient, the Board of Management will publish an Annual Admissions Notice on the school website. The Annual Admissions Notice will be published at least one week before the College accepts any applications for admission for that year. This Admissions Policy should be read together with the Annual Admissions Notice for the relevant school year.

The Admissions Notice will provide:

- a. a link to the College's Admissions Policy;
  - b. a link to the Application for Admission Form for that year;
  - c. the date from which the school will accept applications for admission for the relevant year;
  - d. the deadline for receiving applications for admission for the relevant year;
  - e. the date by which the College will make offers of admission;
  - f. the date by which an offer of admission must be accepted;
  - g. the number of boarding and the number of day places being made available by the College for the year group.
2. An Application for Admission Form together with the College Mission and Ethos Statement, this Admissions Policy and the College Code of Behaviour is available on the school website. These policies may assist parents in deciding whether to apply to the College. Acceptance of an offer of admission to Alexandra College implies acceptance of and support for

those statements and policies.

3. The Application for Admission Form must be completed and submitted online before the indicated deadline. A date for receipt of completed Application for Admission Forms will be indicated in the Annual Admissions Notice.
4. The Application for Admission Form is only complete when the terms and conditions have been accepted and the application fee paid.
5. Applications will be considered only when all relevant information has been provided and parents have formally:
  - i. accepted the ethos statement of the College;
  - ii. undertaken to support the Code of Behaviour;
  - iii. undertaken that their daughter understands and will comply with the Code of Behaviour.
6. A number of parents will have submitted an Application for Admission Form or expression of interest before the coming into force of the relevant sections of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018. This will be taken into account in the procedures outlined. Those students whose names were placed on a waiting list before 1 February 2020 will be allocated places on a first come first served basis until and including September 2025.

## **9. Admission Criteria**

- a. The Department of Education and Skills Rules state that secondary school students must be aged 12 on 1st January in the calendar year following the child's entry into First Year. Birth Certificate evidence must be submitted with the Application for Admission Form.
- b. If the College is oversubscribed, that is if the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available admission will be in accordance with and in order of the priority criteria set out at section 10 below.
- c. The priority criteria are used to allocate places in a fair and transparent manner and so as to reflect the tradition, role and characteristic spirit of the College.
- d. All decisions on applications for admission to Alexandra College will be based on:
  - i. This Admissions Policy
  - ii. The Annual Admissions Notice
  - iii. The information provided by the applicant in the College's online application form received during the period for receiving applications specified in our Annual Admissions Notice

- e. Criteria that are not set out in Sections 10 or 12 will not be used to make a decision on an application for admission to Alexandra College. In particular, when deciding on an application or when placing a prospective student on a waiting list, the College will not consider or take into account:
  - i. a student's prior attendance at the Alexandra College pre-school or pre-school service
  - ii. contributions to the school other than deposit, fees and charges
  - iii. a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude
  - iv. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
  - v. a requirement that a student, or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission other than an interview to assess suitability of boarding for the student;
  - vi. a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of her family attending or having previously attended the school other than in accordance with section 10(i) below;
  - vii. the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school subject to section 8(6) above.
- f. The Board of Management has delegated its authority in this regard, in the first instance, to the Principal. Decisions relating to applications are made by the Principal in accordance with the priority outlined in section 10 below.
- g. If there are insufficient places available when places are being allocated at a particular priority level and two or more students tie for a place, random selection will apply in respect of that priority level.

## **10. Priority Criteria**

- a. Applications for boarding places will be considered first in accordance with the priority criteria below. When the boarding places have been allocated, day places will be allocated in accordance with these priority criteria.
- b. Students transferring from the Junior School whose parents have accepted and undertaken to support the Code of Behaviour. Students transferring from the Junior School will already have been subject to the priority criteria and parents will already have accepted the Mission and Ethos Statement of Alexandra College.
- c. Applicants whose names were placed on a waiting list before 1 February 2020 in order of their priority on that list.

- d. Children for whom there is documented evidence of membership of the Church of Ireland, will then be allocated places.<sup>1</sup>
- e. Children for whom there is documented evidence of membership of recognised reformed traditions within the Christian Church will then be allocated places.<sup>2</sup>
- f. Children one of whose parents is a documented member of the Church of Ireland will then be allocated places.
- g. Children one of whose parents is a documented member of a reformed tradition within the Christian Church will then be allocated places
- h. If places remain, priority will then be given in this order to:
  - i. Sisters of existing students,
  - ii. Sisters of past students
  - iii. Daughters and granddaughters of past students (up to 25% of the intake group)
  - iv. Daughters of staff.
- i. Boarding students who wish to transfer to available day places will then be allocated places.
- j. If there are remaining places when all priority criteria have been applied, any remaining places will be issued on the basis of random selection.
- k. If the College is not over-subscribed applications for admission will continue to be accepted, even after that deadline for application set out in the Annual Admissions Notice has passed.

## **11. Notification of Decisions, Offers and Acceptance of Offers**

- a. Offers for places in First Year will be communicated in writing within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice to the parents/guardians of those to whom a place has been allocated.
- b. The offer will include a Confirmation of Acceptance Form which must be completed and returned together with a deposit to be received by the indicated date.
- c. In accepting an offer of admission from Alexandra College, you must indicate:

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<sup>1</sup> churches which are full ecumenical partners of the Church of Ireland

<sup>2</sup> member churches of the Irish Council of Churches, Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland or Conference of European Churches i.e Belgian/French/Dutch Reformed Church, Congregational Federation, Lutheran Church, Methodist Church, Moravian Church, Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Old Catholic Church, Orthodox Churches, Presbyterian Church, the Salvation Army and the United Reformed Church

- i. if you have accepted an offer 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. if you have applied for and are awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school or schools, and if so details of the other school or schools concerned.
- d. Failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the College.
- e. In accordance with section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, Alexandra College may share data with other schools so as to facilitate the efficient admission of students. The College may 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:

- iv. the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
  - v. the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
  - vi. the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
  - vii. a student's personal details including her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).
- f. The parents of those who are not allocated a place will be advised in writing:
  - i. that no place is currently available,
  - ii. the reasons why no place was offered to them
  - iii. of the applicant's ranking against the priority criteria
  - iv. of the applicant's place on the waiting list.

Applicants will be informed of their right to seek a review of the College's decision in accordance with section 16.

## **12. The College's Right to Refuse or Withdraw an Offer**

Alexandra College may refuse to make an offer if:

1. The College is oversubscribed for the relevant year.

Alexandra College may refuse to make an offer or may withdraw its offer of acceptance if:



1. the student is not a girl;
2. it is established that incorrect or misleading information was provided in the Application for Admission;
3. Confirmation of Acceptance of the offer was not received by the College by the date set out in the Annual Admissions Notice;
4. the prospective student and/or her parent/guardian has failed to confirm in writing that they accept and undertake to make all reasonable efforts to comply with and support the College's Code of Behaviour; or
5. the College was not informed about any offers from other schools.

### **13. Waiting List**

- a. If the College is oversubscribed for the relevant year, the College will compile a waiting list of applicants. The list will be valid for the school year in which admission is sought.
- b. Placement on the waiting list is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications by the College having applied the selection criteria set out at Section 10 of this Admissions policy.
- c. 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.
- d. Any place subsequently becoming available through non-acceptance, cancellation or withdrawal will be allocated using the priority criteria listing at Section 10 and within each priority on a first come first served basis.

### **14. Late Applications**

- a. All Applications for Admission received after the closing date set out in the Annual Admissions Notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with this Admissions Policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.
- b. Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the College received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. If no place is available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

### **15. Admission criteria for entry to any year other than First Year and during the school year**

Admission during the school year or into a year other than first year may be possible subject to conditions, including availability of space, acceptance of the Code of Behaviour and Ethos and Mission Statement, subject choice availability

and timing within the school year programme and curriculum. Available places will be considered and allocated in accordance with the admission and priority criteria set out at section 10 above.

#### **16. Review of admission decision**

- a. The admission process is managed as a devolved function of the College Board of Management. As the Board of Management will not be directly involved in the administration of the allocation process, the Board of Management may review the application of the Admissions Policy and content of the Annual Admissions Notice. Parents/guardians of applicants may request a review by the Board of Management or by a sub-committee of the Board of Management authorised to do so.
- b. A request for review must be in writing and must set out the grounds of the request.
- c. Following a review, the Board of Management will issue the applicant with a statement that there was no failure or error in making the decision to refuse entry or that there was a failure or error in making the decision to refuse entry and whether or not it had a material effect on the outcome of the application.
- d. If the Board of Management finds that there was a failure or error and that it had a material effect on the outcome of the application, it will rectify that failure or error.
- e. Following the conclusion of this review procedure an applicant parent/guardian may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills in accordance with section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 by sending a completed Section 29 Appeals Application Form, including a letter confirming the decision of the board of management signed by a member of the board of management and clearly state their title.
- f. The appeal should be submitted within 42 calendar days of the date the board of management's decision.

#### **17. Arrangements for students who opt out of religious instruction**

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Alexandra College without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent and the student or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

The following policy and related procedures were adopted by the Board of Management on

[ ] and approved by the Council as patron of the College on [ ]

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of the Council)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_