

Admission Policy of Rockbrook School (version 01.09.2020)

Roll number: 60321J
School Patron: Families in Education (FamEd) CLG

About our school

Rockbrook School is a single-sex fee paying voluntary secondary school for boys, with a Catholic ethos and providing a six-year school cycle. Our vision for our students: a truly educated, informed and discerning mind, a mature moral foundation and a comprehensive range of personal and social skills. On this foundation our students can build for the rest of their lives – in higher education, in their careers and the world of work, in their family life, in their contribution to society.

Core values underpin and imbue the collaborative relationships between staff, students and parents, helping us to act in unison each day to maintain our vibrant school community and its common goal. Central to the unique Rockbrook educational experience is our commitment to:

- Enabling each student to strive for academic excellence. Each student does his best to achieve the highest academic and intellectual development he can attain, supported by high quality teaching within a stimulating learning environment. Our distinctive, challenging and varied curriculum places an emphasis on cultivating a spirit of intellectual adventure and life-long habits of study and work.
- Helping each student to develop his character. We recognise that achievement in any area of life is built on the character habits, or virtues, that enable this success: hard work, courage, perseverance, optimism, generous service to others. Rockbrook helps each student flourish, drawing out his potential and teaching him how to think for himself and take ownership over his actions.
- Sharing learning between school and home. Parents are the first and most important educators of their children, and the parents who independently established Rockbrook in 1975 were precisely seeking a school that would support the values they themselves were imparting at home. The school was created as a family school and continues as a family school, working closely with parents to ensure their sons are thriving both in school and outside.
- Valuing the role of faith in the lives of our students and their families. Our ethos is an ethos for the whole person. While the school presents to students, in accordance with the doctrines and traditions of the Catholic Church, the timeless Gospel teachings of Jesus Christ, lived simply and sincerely in the ordinary life of the school,¹ Rockbrook is open to and welcomes students of other religious faiths, and promotes an atmosphere of profound respect for everyone at all times.
- Cherishing the dreams, and recognising the needs, of every student. Through its inclusive policies and procedures, and subject to available resources, the school seeks to maximise the progression of all students. They are helped to overcome short-term barriers to learning and manage any long-term learning difficulty.

Rockbrook welcomes applications from all families who seek excellence in academic education and personal character development and who appreciate the vision outlined above.

¹ The school is kindly assisted in its provision of faith formation and pastoral/chaplaincy services by Opus Dei, a personal prelature of the Catholic Church. Opus Dei provides similar spiritual care to numerous schools and other educational initiatives all over the world.

Our Admission Policy

This policy was approved by the school patron, FamEd CLG, on 1st September 2020. It is published on the school's website and is available in hardcopy on request. It 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 the school patron, school staff and parents of boys attending the school. It must be read in conjunction with the school's annual Admission Notice. Clarification on any matters in this policy may be obtained from the school's Admissions Office.

Admission Statement

Enrolling in our school

The relevant dates and timelines for Rockbrook's admission process are set out in the school's Admission Notice, which is published annually on our website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned. Admission is open for three weeks, at the end of which all applications are processed.

Parents² wishing to enrol their son may do so by submitting an application on the school's official Application Form, along with all requested attachments. The school does not charge any fee for submitting an application for admission to the school. To enrol as a student, a boy must be at least 12 years of age by the 1st January of the year following entry.

Parents of prospective students are very welcome to visit the school at any stage by making an appointment with the Admissions Office or by attending an Open Day.

Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Rockbrook are based on:

- (a) This Admission Policy
- (b) The school's annual Admission Notice
- (c) Information provided by the applicant in the Application Form received during the period specified in our annual Admission Notice for receiving applications.

The school admits each boy seeking admission, except where the school is oversubscribed.

In the event of an offer of a place being made, acceptance of the place is secured on receipt of a non-refundable deposit within the time frame specified in the letter or in the school's annual Admissions Notice. Otherwise the offer is deemed to have expired. This acceptance deposit is offset against the school fees for the first year of entry. Prior to making a decision, a meeting for parents with school management may be scheduled.

² 'Parents' in this document refers to parents or guardians. 'Applicant' should be taken to refer to parents or guardians, or to the student himself where he has reached the age of 18 years.

Oversubscription to the school

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the following selection criteria, in the order listed, are applied to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual Admission Notice.

1. Existing waiting list (frozen on 1st February 2020)
2. Brothers of present students and/or those who have sisters in Rosemont School
3. Brothers of past students of Rockbrook or Rosemont School
4. Sons of current staff members
5. Sons or grandsons of past students of Rockbrook or Rosemont School
6. Boys attending designated feeder schools to Rockbrook
7. Boys from the immediate neighbourhood

The Board reserves the right to allocate a small number of places in each class to international students.

In the event that there are two or more boys tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria above, boys living physically nearest to the school will receive priority. Selection criteria that are not included in our school Admission Policy are not used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

After the above criteria are applied, a waiting list is compiled of remaining applications in the order of priority assigned to the applications and remains valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Notification of decisions & acceptance of offers

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school concerning admission within the timeline outlined in the annual Admissions Notice. If a boy is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why he is not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the boy's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the boy's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

In accepting an offer of admission from Rockbrook, an applicant must indicate—

1. whether or not they have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If they have accepted such offers, they must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned, and
2. 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.

An offer of admission may not be made, or may be withdrawn, by Rockbrook where—

- it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission within the specified timeframe.
- 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 his or her son; or
- an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements for the acceptance of an offer as set out above.

Late applicants

Applications for the year concerned are still accepted after closure of the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the Admission Notice. Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than 15 school days after the date on which the school received the application. A late application will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the boy's name will be put on the admissions waiting list for the year concerned using the selection criteria. If none of the selection criteria apply, the date of receipt of the application determines its placement position in the list.

Reviews and appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

- An applicant may request the Board of Management 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.
- 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, an applicant 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.
- 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.

Admission of students moving to Rockbrook from another secondary school

The procedures of the school in relation to students who seek to move to Rockbrook from another secondary school, either before or after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

1. Applicants should submit an application to the school on the school's official Application Form, along with all requested attachments.

2. The school informs applicants in writing of its decision on the application within 15 school days. Prior to making a decision, a meeting for parents with school management may be scheduled.
3. In the event of an offer of a place being made, acceptance of the place is secured on receipt of a non-refundable deposit within the time frame specified in the letter. Otherwise the offer is deemed to have expired. This deposit is offset against the school fees for the first year of entry.

Arrangements regarding religious instruction

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Rockbrook without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. Note that not all aspects of the subject Religious Education in Rockbrook may be deemed as religious instruction.

List of feeder schools for Rockbrook

The list of feeder schools is available on request from our Admissions Office.

Notes on our admission process

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, Rockbrook does not take into account any of the following when deciding on applications for admission or when placing a boy on a waiting list for admission: (1) a boy's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí (2) a boy's academic ability, skills or aptitude (3) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of the applicant (4) a requirement that a boy, or the applicant, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission (5) a boy'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 the selection criteria; in relation to parents and grandparents having attended Rockbrook or Rosemont School, our school will only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual Admission Notice (6) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school. This is subject to the application being received within the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual Admission Notice of the school for the school year concerned.

Rockbrook does not discriminate in its admission of a boy to the school, or the applicant in respect of the boy, on any of the grounds of sex, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race, of the Traveller community, special educational needs. The school does not discriminate where it does not grant admission to a student who is not of the male sex. As the school provides education in an environment which promotes Catholic values, the school does not discriminate in relation to the admission of students where it admits students who are Catholic in preference to others, or where it does not grant admission to a student who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school. The school does not discriminate where it does not grant admission to a student with special needs beyond the resources available in the school. The school does not discriminate where it does not grant admission to a student when doing so will cause the school to be non-compliant with its health and safety policy.

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 an application for admission to the school has been received, an offer of admission to the school has been made, or an offer of admission to the school has been accepted. This list may include any or all of the following: (a) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school (b) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school (c) the date on which an

offer of admission was accepted by an applicant (d) 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).