

**Admission Policy**

**Edmund Rice Secondary School**

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**School Address: Mount St. Nicholas,**

**Carrick on Suir,**

**Co. Tipperary. E32 P039**

**Roll number: 65270U**

**School Patron: The Edmund Rice Schools Trust.**

**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 Edmund Rice Secondary School 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**

ERSS is an all-boys Catholic voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools 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 ERSS 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.”

 **Management and Organisation**

The Board comprises four nominees of the trustees, two of the parents and two of the teaching staff thus emphasising a sharing of responsibilities by all the parties involved in the education of the boys. The Principal acts as secretary to the Board of Management and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school.

A Parents’ Council is elected at the beginning of each year at a general meeting of parents. The Parents’ Council has many and varied functions. They are the parents’ voice in the running of the school and are centrally involved in policy development and ratification.

**Students’ Council**

Currently the Students’ Consultative Council consists of six Leaving Cert. students and a delegate from each class, who are elected each year by the students. The elected students participate in a ‘leadership programme’ which helps them to become an effective Students Council. The council is the students’ voice and operates in parallel with the parents’ council and the teaching staff.

**Code of Behaviour**

As a school entrusted with the education of each pupil we have an obligation to create an atmosphere conducive to good learning in an environment where every member of the school community, staff and pupils, feels respected, valued and affirmed.

Every effort will be made to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in school. As a caring Christian community the school acknowledges the need to try to enhance the esteem and dignity of each pupil.

The code of behaviour has been developed by the Board of Management in consultation with the staff, Parents’ Council and Students’ Council and in accordance with the Developing a Code Of Behaviour Guidelines 2008.

The prevailing culture will be positive. A generally caring attitude, which is nurtured through positive relationships within the school community, will be supplemented by:

* Praising individuals or the class group.
* Involving students in school life through extracurricular activities, Students’ Council etc.
* Encouraging students on a one-to-one basis.
* Showing an interest in the students’ general well- being.
* Being constructive when completing school reports.
* Making parents feel welcome at Parent/Teacher meetings.
* The school has an annual awards ceremony where pupils who have contributed in some significant way to the life of the school are recognised.
* Certificates are presented to students who have completed certain modules of work.
* A student of the week draw is made from all the students nominated to the Principal.
* A pilot programme of Restorative Justice has been introduced at year head level in an attempt to deal with issues in a social justice fashion.

**Extracurricular Activities**

It is important that the variety of other interests and abilities which the boys have are provided for and nurtured. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a variety of sports and activities.

Teams compete successfully at different age-levels in Gaelic football, hurling and soccer and rugby. Tennis, athletics, swimming and chess are catered for, with individuals and teams entered in Provincial and National competitions.

Students are given opportunities to participate in Outdoor Education and Leadership programmes (Student Mentoring of first years). Class groups regularly visit theatre events. Recently a school choir and band has been founded. Class groups participate in retreats and wellbeing activities.

In line with the ethos of the school, we have recently initiated a social justice society and a young SVP group. These entities allow for leadership opportunities and holistic development of all involved.

**3. Admission Statement**

ERSS will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

1. the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
2. the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
3. the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
4. the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
5. the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
6. the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
7. the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
8. the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
9. 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.

ERSS is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

ERSS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of the Catholic faith in preference to others.

ERSS is a school whose objective 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 of the Catholic faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

No special class at present.

**5. Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

1. the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details)
2. 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

ERSS 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.

ERSS is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the 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. Applicants with siblings in the school

2. Applicants who are children of Staff members

3. Applicants whose parents who are past pupils up to a maximum of 25% of the total places available as specified in the annual admission notice

4. All other places will be allocated by lottery

5. A waiting list will be set up for unsuccessful applicants

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), the following arrangements will apply:

A lottery will be used to decide who is allocated a place.

**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:

1. a student’s prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
2. the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
3. a student’s academic ability, skills or aptitude unless the school opens a special education unit in the future.
4. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student’s parents;
5. a requirement that a student, or his parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
6. 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 (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and (2) parents of a student having attended the school. In relation to (2) parents having attended, a school may only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school’s annual admission notice.
7. the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school; this is 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.

**8 Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to ERSS 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 ERSS, 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.

**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 ERSS where—

1. it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
2. 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.
3. 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
4. an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of ‘acceptance of an offer’ as set out in section 10 above.

**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 certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

**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 ERSS 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 ERSS 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

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

(a.) Applications from students who are or have been attending another school:

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school’s intake group are as follows:

1. Applications will be considered from students who are/ have been attending another school. Such students must complete the transfer form and the standard application form. All necessary information and copies of school reports must be available from the applicant’s current or former school.

2. In considering such applications the following will be considered

• The school must be satisfied with the reasons for the application. The student and or his parents must be able to demonstrate why the student isn’t/ wasn’t able to continue in his current or former school.

• The student should be in a position to accommodate to the subject structure available in this school and will not be allowed enrol if he is not, within reason, able to do the subjects on offer.

• There must be room for the student in the classes.

• For applications made later in the school year, the principal on behalf of the Board of Management may decide to refuse admission at that time and advise that a reapplication be made at the commencement of the next school year.

• An application for admission may be refused 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.

• The Board will not enrol a student who has been suspended/excluded from another school in a blatantly unlawful manner where as a result of an incident or incidents in his current or previous school the student is told to “find another school” or “we are not allowing him back” etc. Neither will the school consider an application where the parents wish to enrol the student so as to avoid disciplinary action arising from breach of school rules in his current or previous school.

(b.) Procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

1. Applications will be considered from students who are/ have been attending another school. Such students must complete the transfer form and the standard application form. All necessary information and copies of school reports must be available from the applicant’s current or former school.

2. In considering such applications the following will be considered:

• The school must be satisfied with the reasons for the application. The student and or his parents must be able to demonstrate why the student isn’t/ wasn’t able to continue in his current or former school.

• The student should be in a position to accommodate to the subject structure available in this school and will not be allowed enrol if he is not, within reason, able to do the subjects on offer.

• There must be room for the student in the classes.

• For applications made later in the school year, the principal on behalf of the Board of Management may decide to refuse admission at that time and advise that a reapplication be made at the commencement of the next school year.

• 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.

• The Board will not enrol a student who has been suspended/excluded from another school in a blatantly unlawful manner where as a result of an incident or incidents in his current or previous school the student is told to “find another school” or “we are not allowing him back” etc. Neither will the school consider an application where the parents wish to enrol the student so as to avoid disciplinary action arising from breach of school rules in his current or previous school.

(c.) Applications to Repeat the Leaving Cert. Year

Application should be made on the relevant application form.

Applications to repeat the Leaving Cert. will be considered from students who have completed their second level education in this school or another school. The following factors will be considered when deciding whether or not to accept an application.

• The school must be satisfied with the reasons for the application.

• The student must be able to demonstrate how he will benefit from repeating in this school.

• The student must accommodate the existing time table structure available in this school and will not be allowed repeat if he is not, within reason, able to do the subjects on offer.

• There must be space for the student in the classes.

• Commitment to his education. There must be evidence that the student has a reasonably good attitude towards his studies and has made a reasonable effort to succeed in his first year doing the Leaving Cert. An application may be refused if the student has demonstrated a poor attitude to his schoolwork to the extent that his presence in a class would undermine the efforts of the school to maintain an effective learning environment in classes.

• Behaviour: There must be evidence that the student has been cooperative with his teachers and that he didn’t behave in a manner which undermined the teacher and the work of the class. The Board may decide to turn down the application if there is evidence that the student’s behav-iour has been such that it would have a significantly negative effect on the other students in the classes.

(d. ) Applications to enrol in Transition Year.

Applications are invited in March each year from Third Year students who may wish to enrol in Transition Year. Application should be made on the relevant application form. Applications may be considered from students in other schools. Typically there will be 24 places in a TY class. In recent years the school has formed two TY classes. In the event there are more than a number divisible by twenty-four, classes may be slightly larger. Cognisance will be taken of the teacher unions directives on class size.

Applications for a place in Transition Year are welcome from students from other schools. These are subject to the criteria set out in 1. above.

Criteria used in assessing an application:

Behavioural record. (This will be determined by the record of the student’s behaviours as recorded on his Year Head file.)

Attitude to study and people.

Suitability of the student to the programme offered.

Suitability of the programme to the particular student.

The application process is as follows:

• All current Third Year students and their parents are given a copy of the Programme with an application form.

• The students’ records will be investigated by the student’s current teachers. Teachers will note any gross inconsistencies with the above criteria.

• If there are significant concerns about the suitability of an applicant, a sub-committee, com-prising of the Deputy Principal, Third Year Head and a TY coordinator will interview the applicant.

• In the event the student is unsuccessful at interview he and his parents/guardians may appeal in writing to the Principal within 10 days of the interview. The Principal will respond in 5 days.

• If the student is still unsuccessful he may appeal to the Board of Management within 5 days of being informed he has been unsuccessful.

The criteria and procedure above will also apply to applications from students in another school.

(d.) Applications to repeat a year

Applications to repeat a year will be considered subject to the criteria laid down by the DES in circular M02/95 and a selection process similar to those laid out for acceptance into TY.

Please Note:

1-Submission of any form does not guarantee a place in the school.

2- Personal data collected about prospective students and their parents will be retained and used strictly in accordance with the provisions of the GDPR as commenced on 25th. May 2018. Further details on data protection are set out in the school’s Data Protection Policy.

This policy is closely linked to other school policies relating to student participation. These policies have been drawn up in a collaborative fashion involving consultation with staff, parents and students and have been ratified by the Board of Management (or may be in draft form). All parents/students are expected to be familiar with the policies as they with the rules and regulations for post-primary schools provide the rationale for the successful operation of our school. The policies can be found on the school website.

Due to the changing nature of education and society there will be a need to introduce new policy initiatives on an ongoing basis. Acceptance of a place in the school indicates a willingness to abide by the published (and as of yet unpublished) school polices as located on the school website.

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

The board of ERSS or any persons acting on its behalf will not 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, or

(b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

**17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

The following are the school’s arrangements for parents of students and students (over 18) who have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school:

These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students.

Parents of students and students (over 18) who wish to opt out of RE class should make a written request to the principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss their options. Throughout this process the constitutional right of the parent/ student (over 18 years) will be respected by the school.

The 1998 Education Act states that schools are required to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students (Section 9 (d)). At ERSS the allocated time on the time-table for Religious Education responds to this. Students who opt out of RE class are required to use this time to study material relating to their own religious tradition or belief, for example sacred texts. Students of no religious faith, who opt out of RE class, are required to study relevant literature or philosophical texts. A list of suggested texts can be provided by the school. In line with the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter, ERSS places great importance on the religious or spiritual formation of all its students. Each student has his own personal journey which will be encouraged and respected. Students who opt out of RE class will not be offered extra tuition or study periods.

**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 and must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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. This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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. This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

**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). This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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). This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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.