



Admission Policy of Glenstal Abbey School Murroe, County Limerick V94 HC84

Roll number: 64150F

Patron: The Board of Governors of Glenstal Abbey School

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Document Version Control

Version	Date	Description
1.0	March 2004	Original Version
1.1	May 2007	Mission Statement amended
1.2	Jan 2008	Deposit details changed SEN section amended
1.3	Oct 2008	Age limits changed Status as a 6-day teaching, 7-day all boys boarding school clarified
2.0	May 2012	Re-drafted to provide for admission of Day-Boarders Other clarifications
2.1	October 2017	Edited for the addition of the separate role of Principal
3.0	Sept 2020	Re-drafted to comply with the provisions of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018

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 Governors has consulted with the Board of Management, school staff and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 23 September 2020. 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 Glenstal Abbey School's 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

Glenstal Abbey School is a seven-day boarding voluntary secondary school for boys. The school has a Catholic ethos and operates under the trusteeship of the Benedictine Monks of Glenstal Abbey, represented by the Board of Governors of Glenstal Abbey School.

"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
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people
- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus
- (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 Glenstal Abbey School 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.

Glenstal Abbey School seeks to offer students a Christian environment in which to grow together; fostering independent, critical and imaginative thinking that will help guide them through life. The school seeks to provide an educational experience which will equip students with:

- a lifelong willingness to learn
- a healthy sense of personal identity and courteous self-confidence
- a spirit of creativity and innovation
- compassion and care for the needs of others
- independence and originality of thought
- honour and integrity in all they do and say
- an ability to communicate

- a capacity to lead
- resilience and courage in adversity
- a knowledge of and appreciation for the tradition of Benedictine spirituality
- respect for the dignity of others and diversity within the community
- readiness to adapt to changing situations and circumstances

The school's distinctive strengths that enable such beneficial outcomes include:

- its Benedictine ethos and tradition
- very capable and committed teaching and support staff
- smaller class sizes and individual care and attention
- remarkable companionship between students
- the experience of living in a vibrant community
- the unique beauty of the Glenstal demesne
- a safe and secure environment

3. Admission Statement

Glenstal Abbey School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds:

- (a) the gender of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- (b) the civil status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- (c) the family status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- (d) the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- (e) the religion of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- (f) the disability of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- (g) the race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- (h) the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned being a member of the Traveller community
- (i) the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned having special educational needs

As per section 61(3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status', 'disability', 'discriminate', 'family status', 'gender', 'race', 'religion', 'sexual orientation' and 'Traveller community' grounds shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

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

Glenstal Abbey School 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 Roman Catholic student in preference to others.

Glenstal Abbey School 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 Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- (a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5 below for further details)
- (b) a parent of a student, when required by the Principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student
- (c) in the case of an application for admission as a full residential boarder, the Headmaster and Principal, following an interview with the student and his parent(s)/guardian(s) (by videoconference where necessary), conclude that full residential boarding in Glenstal is not appropriate for the student

Glenstal Abbey School 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.

Glenstal Abbey School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Glenstal Abbey School recognises and appreciates that not every boy is suited to full residential boarding. Certain traits that may be considered as desirable for residential schooling will be considered during interviews for admission to full boarding. These may include:

- Willingness to integrate into the school community through participation in whole-school and extra-curricular school activities
- Respect for others
- Emotional maturity
- Independence
- Self motivation
- Resilience

5. 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. Priority will be given to brothers of current pupils
2. Priority will be given to brothers of past students
3. Priority will be given to those who participate satisfactorily in the annual 'Live-in', or a boarding Taster experience, or an Open Day, or an equivalent online event (in the case of admission as a full residential boarder)
4. Priority will be given to sons and grandsons of past students (up to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice)
5. Priority will be given to Roman Catholic boys
6. Priority will be given to sons of members of staff

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: places will be allocated by lottery.

6. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school, other than in relation to a fee-charging school
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude
- (d) the occupation, 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 as a full residential boarder
- (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 siblings, parents or grandparents (consideration of parents and grandparents having attended may only apply to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice)
- (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 and also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists [up until 31st January 2025 only])

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Glenstal Abbey School 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 13 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 14 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.

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 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 17 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Glenstal Abbey School you must indicate—

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

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

10. 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 Glenstal Abbey School where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 9 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.

11. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;

- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

12. 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 Glenstal Abbey School 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. Separate waiting lists will be compiled for applicants for admission as a day-boarder and applicants for admission as a full residential boarder.

Placement on the waiting list of Glenstal Abbey School 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 corresponding waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

13. 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 admission 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.

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

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:

Applications will be evaluated at the time of submission, and, subject to space being available in the desired year group, admission will be at the discretion of the Headmaster and Principal, following an interview (by videoconference if necessary) with the boy and at least one his parents/guardians.

The 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:

If a vacancy arises in the intake group during the course of the school year, a place will be offered to the next student on the corresponding waiting list, as outlined in section 12 above.

Applications for admission to other year groups after the commencement of the school year will be evaluated at the time of submission, and, subject to space being available in the desired year group, admission will be at the discretion of the Headmaster and Principal, following an interview (by videoconference if necessary) with the boy and at least one his parents/guardians.

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.

15. Declaration in relation to fees

Glenstal Abbey School is a fee-charging school specified in the list of fee-charging schools published by the Minister from time, as referred to in section 64 of the Education Act 1998, as amended.

The Board of Governors of Glenstal Abbey School determines annually the fees for the following:

- (a) an application for admission of a student to Glenstal Abbey
- (b) the deposit payable on acceptance of a place in Glenstal Abbey
- (c) the fees and charges payable each year

Up to date payment of school fees and charges is a condition of continued enrolment in Glenstal Abbey School.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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

17. 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.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the Board of Management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the Board of Management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the Board of Management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the Board of Management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.