

CIC Summerhill College, Sligo

Admissions Policy of Summerhill College, College Road, Sligo



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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/guardians of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on August 31st 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request via the school email address.

The relevant dates and timelines for Summerhill College'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 in question.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request via the school email address.

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2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Summerhill College is a Catholic all boys voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Bishop of Elphin.

“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:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the students, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
 - a living relationship with God and with other people;
 - a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus;
 - the formation of the students 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 Summerhill College 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.

Summerhill College, Sligo will endeavour to:

- Provide students with a catholic education that has a sound spiritual, faith, academic and practical content.
- Nourish the building up of a personal relationship with God according to catholic wisdom as lived out in the community of the church.
- Respect and facilitate the spiritual/human development of students from all religious traditions or faith stances.
- Assist students to reach their full potential by encouraging the talents and gifts unique to each one.
- Develop a sense of self-respect and responsibility among students for themselves and for those whom they can serve, and to foster a sense of community within the school.
- Foster an environment which enables staff and students to promote quality teaching and learning in an atmosphere which is enriching for everybody.
- Inspire students to respect and love their cultural heritage and develop as responsible citizens.
- Encourage students to be creative in their use of leisure through the extra-curricular activities offered.

3. School's expectations of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) in relation to all applications for enrolment

As the primary responsibility for the education of their children rests with parents / guardians, we encourage parents/guardians to take an active part in the life of the school by:

- Supporting the development and implementation of school policy
- Engaging with and becoming actively involved in the Parents' Association of the college
- Supporting the staff in their efforts to promote the moral, physical, spiritual, and academic welfare of their son
- Attending Parent/Teacher and Information meetings held during each academic year
- Ensuring that there is a good environment at home for the completion of homework and revision
- Supporting their son in his social development by providing boundaries around activities that would interfere with successful application to study and homework
- Keeping in regular contact with the school concerning the development of their son.
- Supporting their son's educational progress by monitoring and signing the school journal
- Paying the voluntary contribution, subject/programme related fees and where possible supporting fundraising events thus assisting with the ongoing development of the school

4. Admissions Statement

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

- 4.1. the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- 4.2. the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- 4.3. the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- 4.4. the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- 4.5. the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- 4.6. the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- 4.7. the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- 4.8. the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- 4.9. 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.

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

Summerhill College is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

5. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

Summerhill College, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established four classes to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

6. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- 6.1. the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 7](#) below for further details)
- 6.2. a parent/guardian of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

Summerhill College 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.

Summerhill College is a Catholic ethos school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic, where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) classes in Summerhill College provide an education exclusively for boys with ASD and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

In order to identify the specified category of special educational need of the student, the following is required:

- Each applicant must have a definite diagnosis of Autism and their primary diagnosis is Autism according to the DSM IV/V or ICD 11.
- Applicants must have a professional recommendation by a Psychologist, Psychiatrist or multidisciplinary team for placement in the ASD Classes. These reports must have been completed within 2 years prior to the date of enrolment.
- Reports from all previous schools attended including current Student Support File or Individual Education Plan for the applicant.

7. 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.

In the event of there being two or more students tying for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (where the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

7.1. Selection criteria

- 7.1.1. Brothers of present or past students of Summerhill College
- 7.1.2. Sons of current or past full time staff members
- 7.1.3. Sons of past students of Summerhill College
- 7.1.4. Male applicants who have attended the following feeder primary schools:
 - Gaelscoil Chnoc Na Re, Ballydoogan, Co. Sligo
 - Our Lady of Mercy NS, Pearse Road, Sligo
 - Ransboro NS, Ransboro, Co. Sligo
 - Rathcormac NS, Rathcormac, Co. Sligo
 - Scoil Asicus, Strandhill, Co. Sligo
 - Scoil Eoin Naofa, Temple Street, Sligo
 - Scoil Naomh Eanna, Carraroe, Co. Sligo
 - Scoil Realt Na Mara, Rosses Point, Co Sligo
 - Scoil Ursula, Strandhill Road, Sligo
 - St Brendans NS, Cartron, Sligo
 - St Edwards NS, Ballytivnan, Sligo
 - St Patricks NS, Calry, Sligo
- 7.1.5. Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories.

7.2. ASD Special Class Selection Criteria

- 7.2.1. Current students enrolled in the school
- 7.2.2. Brothers of present or past students of Summerhill College
- 7.2.3. Sons of past students of Summerhill College
- 7.2.4. Sons of current or past full time staff members
- 7.2.5. Applicants who have attended feeder primary schools at (7.1.4) above
- 7.2.6. Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories.
- 7.2.7. All other applicants.

Where there are fewer places remaining than applicants in a given category, students will be offered places based on a lottery.

The lottery will be conducted as follows:

- The lottery will be supervised by at least three of – A member of the Garda Síochána, the Principal and the Chairperson of the Parents Association.
- Names will be drawn until all places are filled.
- When all places are filled, names of applicants will continue to be drawn to establish the order of the waiting list.
- If a vacancy arises it will be offered to the applicant highest on the waiting list.

Late applications will be considered in order of receipt of application subject to the above criteria. Late applicants into any year will only be considered after all on-time applications have been processed

8. 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:

- 8.1. the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- 8.2. a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to:
 - 8.2.1. admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned.
- 8.3. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents/guardians;
- 8.4. a requirement that a student, or his parents/guardians, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- 8.5. 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.

9. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Summerhill College 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 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16 & 17](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the First Year 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.

10. 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 in question.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see [section 20](#) below for further details).

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

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

- 11.1. 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 accepted and
- 11.2. whether or not you have applied for and are 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 in question.

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

12. 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 Summerhill College where—

- 12.1. it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- 12.2. 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.
- 12.3. the parent/guardian of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- 12.4. an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [section 11](#) above.
- 12.5. Application forms are not fully completed.

13. 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—

- 13.1. an application for admission to the school has been received,
- 13.2. an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- 13.3. an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list of information may include any or all of the following:

- 13.4. the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- 13.5. the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- 13.6. the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- 13.7. 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).

14. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year in question than there are places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Summerhill College were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Summerhill College 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 during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list in the order of priority on the waiting list.

15. 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.

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 of there being no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

16. Selection procedure for application into Fourth Year (Transition Year):

Applications for entry to Transition Year will be accepted from students who are in third year in Post Primary School or an international equivalent. Students already enrolled in the Summerhill College will be given priority when applying for a place on the Transition Year programme.

The Transition Year programme involves a range of learning experiences and activities that require a level of maturity and responsibility, and the programme is not necessarily suited to all students. For that reason the application process is as follows ;

- 16.1. Students fill out the online application form in full before the due date. This will include the Other Areas of Learning which is also required for their Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement.
- 16.2. Receipt of a completed TY application form does not guarantee a place on the Transition Year programme.
- 16.3. The relevant Year Heads will meet with a member of the Senior Management Team to review all applications and they will create a shortlist of candidates that have demonstrated their suitability for and their knowledge of the programme. The selection process will be based on:
 - 16.3.1. The quality of the responses in the application form.
 - 16.3.2. The student's behaviour record to date in the school.

- 16.3.3. The student's overall attitude to school, schoolwork and homework to date in the school. (Where students are accepted from outside the school, they will be required to provide evidence of this)
- 16.3.4. The students on the shortlist may be required to attend an interview with the Transition Year Coordinator and the Deputy Principal where issues are further explored around their suitability. They may then be offered a provisional place on the programme depending on their performance between the selection process and the end of the academic year.

The school reserves the right to refuse a place to applicants for the Transition Year Programme whose behaviour, it considers, would be detrimental to the rights of other students who apply for admission to the Transition Year Programme.

- 16.4. Should the number of applicants still exceed the number of places, a lottery as highlighted in section 7 will take place.

17. 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 attending Summerhill College to classes or years other than the school's first year intake group are as follows:

- An application for student transfer to Summerhill College from another secondary school must be submitted on the *Application Form* which is available upon request. Application forms must be completed in full. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians.
- It is school policy that enrolment is normally only considered for First Year. However, in certain exceptional circumstances the school will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer.
- Where an applicant has attended more than one Post Primary school he must submit all requested reports and files from each school. The application for a place in the school will not be considered where no such reports are provided.
- Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of ongoing disciplinary proceedings in another school, this includes any ongoing statutory procedures in accordance with the Education act 1998 or the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Decisions on application for admission to a year other than First Year will be decided using the following criteria:

- The student transfer is within the terms of the school's Admissions Policy.
- A fully completed application form is received, including all relevant information from the student's former school(s)
- The transfer is of educational benefit to the student.
- The transfer does not impact on the Health and Safety of members of the school community.
- Due account is taken of the availability of space in the school or in specific classes, the suitability/availability of the subjects taught and the levels at which they are taught and the subject options available to the student. The maximum class size is 30 for general subjects, 24 for practical groups and science and 20 for Home Economics.

Where a student is considered for a place, the Principal will consult with the student's parents/guardians, his/her former school and the Education Welfare Officer if necessary. The final decision to approve the transfer will be made by the Board of Management. The school will advise applicants of the outcome of their application within two weeks of the board of management decision.

It is the policy of Summerhill College, except in exceptional circumstances, not to accept any transfer applications after the commencement of the school year.

18. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The Board of Management of Summerhill College or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, 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.

19. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious education

Where a parent/guardian or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 requests that the student attends the school without attending religious education in the school the following arrangements will apply.

- There will be no reduction in the school day for such student(s)
- The parent/guardian or student of 18 years should make a written request to the Principal.
- A meeting will be arranged with the parent/guardian or the student to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school in line with its policy on Religious Education.

20. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent/guardian 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/guardian 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.

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.

Summerhill College
ANNUAL ADMISSION NOTICE FOR 2021/22

Copies of the school's **Admission Policy** and the **Application Form for Admission** for the 2021/22 school year are available as follows: –

To download at: www.summerhillcollege.ie

On request: By emailing info@summerhillcollege.ie or writing to: Summerhill College, College Road, Sligo

1. Application and Decision Dates for admission to 1st Year for 2021/22

1.	The school will commence accepting applications for admission on	22 nd October 2020
2.	The school will cease accepting applications for admission on	13 th November 2020
3.	Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision on their application by	27 th November 2020
4.	Applicants must confirm acceptance of an offer of admission by	11 th December 2020

Failure by an applicant to accept an offer by the 11th December 2020 may result in the offer being withdrawn.

2. Application and Decision Dates for admission to Autism Spectrum Disorder Special Classes for 2021/22

1.	The school will commence accepting applications for admission to the special class on	22 nd October 2020
2.	The school shall cease accepting applications for admission to the special class on	13 th November 2020
3.	Applicants will be notified of the decision on their application for admission to the special class by	27 th November 2020
4.	Applicants must confirm acceptance of an offer of admission by	11 th December 2020

Failure by an applicant to accept an offer by 11th December 2020 may result in the offer being withdrawn

3. Number of places being made available in the 2021/22 school year

The number of places being made available in 1 st year is	192
The number of places being made available in the special class catering for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder is	0

4. Number of places in 1st year for the 2021/22 school year which were offered and accepted before 1 February 2020

The number of places for 1 st year that were offered and accepted prior to the coming into operation of section 62 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 on 1 February 2020 is	192
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5. Breakdown of applications in the previous year

The total number of applications for admission received by the school for admission in 1st year in the 2020/21 school year was 235.

Breakdown of places allocated for 1 st Year for the 2020/21 school year:	
Number of places available	192
Number of applications received	235
Offers made and accepted under each criteria	Criteria 1: brother of a current or past pupil or the son of a staff member. Criteria 2: sons of past pupils Criteria 3: living within 12km of the school Criteria 4: priority given to students who were the eldest
Number of names placed on waiting list for the school year concerned	43

The total number of applications for admission received by the school for admission in the ASD class catering for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the 2020/21 school year was 10.

Breakdown of places allocated for Special Class for the 2020/21 school year:	
Number of places available	10
Number of applications received	10
Number of Offers made and accepted under each criteria	Criteria 1: N/A Criteria 2: N/A
Number of names placed on waiting list for the school year concerned	0