Admissions Policy
for
Children in Need of International Protection
(Ukraine)

(This policy relates to the whole College including EYFS)

Responsible person: Mr Kenneth Evans (Bursar)
Date created: June 2022
CLT review date: June 2023
This Admissions Policy is intended to apply to children who have recently fled conflict zones in Ukraine and are in need of a school place. In this policy, we have referred to this group of children as ‘Children in Need of International Protection’. See Appendix 1.

St Columba’s College and Preparatory School (the College) is a co-educational independent school for pupils aged 4 to 18. The school has circa 750 pupils on the roll.

At our College we recognise the part we can play in responding to humanitarian crises by offering children in need of international protection school places where we are satisfied that we can meet their needs. This not only benefits a particular group of children, but further demonstrates our commitment to build an inclusive and supportive school community and make a contribution to a humanitarian crisis. Furthering our charism, the inclusion of ‘Children in Need of International Protection’ and the positive contribution to our local community would be an additional support that helps our pupils to become responsible global citizens in line with the college’s values.

We recognise that fleeing conflict and leaving your home country could have a traumatic and devastating impact on a child and that circumstances for these children can change rapidly. The Governors and the College Leadership Team have identified that the College can offer up to three places for children in this group in either the Prep or Senior School. The College welcomes approaches from members of staff or current parents via our Admissions Office, who will arrange language tests appropriate to the age of the child along with suitable academic testing. In line with our current policies, no students would be permitted to join a year group which was already full. It should be explored whether there was any financial ability to pay the fees, however, they would likely be 100% bursaries. These new and free school places have been created as additional places and are called “the Protected School Places”. The offer of a Protected School Place under this policy will not mean there is a reduction in the number of places offered under the school’s standard admissions policy. Please note that these places are only available to children in need of international protection per the terms of this policy and at the sole discretion of the Head.

Admissions Procedure
Under UK law, asylum-seeking and/or refugee children of compulsory school age have the same entitlement to full-time education as other UK children. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to provide suitable full-time education for all children of compulsory school age resident in their area. Therefore, for the purposes of admitting children under this policy, the process is as follows:

a. The College will promote this policy and confirm the number of available places and, when requested, provide a copy of this policy;
b. Applications for places may be received from members of staff or current parents and exceptionally, the Local Authority on behalf of the child applicant;
c. The College will consider whether the College is the right environment for the child, bearing in mind their needs and circumstances and the College’s ability to meet those needs;
d. An in-person visit by the child (and their next of kin where possible) is considered an essential part of the application process so the child can see the College for themselves;
e. The Protected School Places will be allocated at the sole discretion of the Head and after completion of the admissions process;
f. The parent(s) or Host/Sponsor will be asked to sign the College’s usual parent contract (which may be amended to remove the clauses regarding payment of fees by the Bursar).

g. The College will be responsible for an appropriate orientation and induction process for the child on admission;

The College will follow this procedure for admissions under this policy on a case-by-case basis but may at the discretion of the Head amend the procedure if appropriate (acting fairly and rationally in each case).

Applicable Policies and Law

Safeguarding, mental health and well-being
All of the usual policies and frameworks of the College in terms of safeguarding, mental health and well-being are applicable to children admitted under this policy. The College recognise that children admitted under this policy may be additionally vulnerable as a result of their circumstances, experiences or needs and will therefore apply existing policies and frameworks in a way that recognises the particular circumstances of this group of children.

Behaviour and discipline
All of the usual policies and frameworks of the College in respect of behaviour, conduct and discipline will be applied to children admitted under this policy but having regard to their particular circumstances.

Equal treatment
The College is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate’s sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or social background.

Special educational needs and disabilities
The College does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The College welcomes children under this policy with disabilities and/or special educational needs, provided we can offer them the support that they require. Knowledge of any special educational needs and/or disabilities is required so that the College can assess the child’s needs and consult with parent(s) or Host/Sponsor about the adjustments which can reasonably be made and so that the College can ensure, for example, that the child will be able to access the education offered and that the College is able to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of others. Where a child is disabled, the College will discuss with parents and/or the Host/Sponsor (and the child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a pupil at the College. There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child’s disability or needs. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the College.

Religious Ethos
The College welcomes children of all faiths and of no faith. As an independent Catholic school conducted in the educational tradition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, a core value of the College is the formation of the whole person. We provide an education that is rooted in religious values, structured through friendly discipline, nurtured by personal attention and committed to academic excellence. Ours is “an education of the head and
“heart,” and we strive to create an environment where “every pupil is known, valued, and treasured.”

**Siblings**
The College recognise that in these circumstances, it may be best to ensure that siblings are placed together where that is possible.

**Complaints**
The College Complaints Procedure is on the college’s website and can be sent to prospective parents on request. The Complaints Procedure is not available for use by prospective parents.

**Record-keeping**
Under this policy, applicants’ details will be held on file with due regard to data protection legislation and the College’s Privacy Notice and the Retention of Records Policy. The College will not hold the personal data of the child for longer than is necessary for a lawful purpose. This will generally be no more than 6 months following an unsuccessful application, but reasons to retain for longer might include to deal with any ongoing matters or queries arising from the application.

**Change in the child’s circumstances**
If the child’s circumstances change, (for example they are returning to their home country or moving elsewhere), the school will work with Local Authority/other relevant partners or authorities and the child’s family to ensure a smooth transition for the child.
Appendix 1
This Appendix forms part of the:
Admissions Policy for Children in Need of International Protection (Ukraine)

This policy applies only to ‘children in need of international protection’ who require a school place. Under this policy a ‘child in need of international protection’ is any of the following:

**Asylum-seeker**
This is a person who is in the UK and has made an application for international protection (which covers both refugee status and humanitarian protection). Most child asylum-seekers will be dependents of their parents. However, an unaccompanied child can claim asylum in their own right. Children who are asylum-seekers are vulnerable to be moved to different parts of the country and do not have a stable status in the UK.

**Refugee**
This is a child who has been granted refugee status by the Home Office. Refugees are normally granted 5 years’ leave to remain as a refugee after which they can apply for indefinite leave to remain. Children accompanying a successful main asylum applicant will normally be granted leave in line with their parent.

**Humanitarian protection**
A person who does not qualify for refugee status may be given protection on the basis that if returned to their country they would face a real risk of suffering serious harm. These individuals may be granted 5 years’ leave to remain by the Home Office after which they can then apply for indefinite leave to remain.

**Ukraine Scheme**
This is divided into three sub-schemes:
- The Ukraine Family Scheme (for people with family already residing in the UK);
- The Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (for people matched with UK residents offering sponsorship to reside with them);
- The Ukraine Extension Scheme (for people who were already lawfully in the UK when the war started but whose visas have or will expired).

Successful applicants under the Ukraine Scheme are granted 36 months’ permission to stay in the UK. Children can benefit from the Scheme either as dependants of their parents or in their own right (eg if they are not accompanied by their parents).

Statutory guidance for England states that an education placement should be secured for all looked after children (including unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children) within 20 school days of coming into care. Being undocumented or having a ‘no recourse to public funds’ condition on a visa does not prevent a child from accessing education (education is not a ‘public fund’ as set out in the immigration rules).