

Admission Policy of Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School

School Address: Rosbercon, New Ross, Co Wexford

Roll number: 636300

School Patron/s: Bishop of Ossory

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 08/10/2020 and amended in May 2022. 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 Our Lady of Lourdes 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

Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School is a Catholic all girls voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Bishop of Ossory.

"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 Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary 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.

Mission Statement

Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School is a learning community based on faith, hope and love, where respect, responsibility and Christian commitment grow, allowing all our students to prepare for a meaningful life.

3. Admission Statement

Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) 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.

Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School is an all-girls school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school.

4. Eligibility for Enrolment in ASD Class

The following conditions, along with the general criteria outlined above, must be satisfied for enrolment to be considered:

- a) The pupil has a diagnosis of Autism i.e. DSM-/ICD-10 from an ASD Multi-Disciplinary team and the pupil is recommended for the placement in a Special Class attached to a mainstream secondary school.
- b) A detailed Psychological and Cognitive Assessment along with a Speech and Language report (if appropriate) and an OT report (if appropriate) within the last previous two years must be provided. Parental permission must be given for further communication with these agencies if necessary.
- c) Each application should be supported by a report from the primary school or previous secondary school if transferring, outlining the student's academic, social, emotional and behavioural needs and outlining the current extent of social inclusion.

ASD Class Enrolment Policy:

- a) All vacancies in the ASD class will be filled as per the criteria outlined in the Admissions Policy, and subject to all the conditions above being in place.
- b) Where an application for a student to be enrolled specifically in the ASD class is unsuccessful this student will not be accommodated in the mainstream intake as our school would not have the capacity to meet their diagnosed needs.
- c) The number of students enrolled in the ASD class each year will depend on resources and the ability of the school to integrate the students into the mainstream classes. The total capacity of the ASD class is six girls. This will not be exceeded. The number of students enrolled each year is determined in consultation with the NCSE.
- d) The inclusion operates on the understanding that the intellectual ability of students enrolling in the special class is similar to the profile of the population of students attending the main stream section of the school and the student would have the ability to integrate into mainstream classes to individual need.
- e) In certain circumstances and following assessment, Our Lady of Lourdes may be unable to meet the needs of an ASD student on the grounds that they are considered a risk to themselves or others. 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. 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 the 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.
- f) An annual review of the student's placement within the ASD class may be held by the ASD Class team together with a nominated representative from the Multidisciplinary Team, and any other significant professional/personnel

involved in the students life to ensure that the ASD class continues to be the most suitable placement option available to the student.

ASD Application Process:

- a) Parent/Legal Guardians are required to indicate on the standard application form that they request consideration for enrolment in the ASD class on behalf of their daughter. Applications from a third part will not be considered.
- b) Applications should be made to the school on the standard application form.
- c) Completed application forms and all required documentation must be received in the school by the specified date in our annual Admissions Notice.

ASD Class Notification of Vacancies:

- a) The Principal will notify the Special Educational Needs Organiser (S.E.N.O) of the number of vacancies in the existing classes in the school for the following year. The S.E.NO will also be informed of names of students on the application list.
- b) When the places for the following year have been filled, the Principal will inform the S.E.N.O of the pupils who still remain on the waiting list without places
- c) The S.E.N.O will also be informed of vacancies that occur during the school year.

ASD Class Transition Programmes:

- a) Parents will be invited to a meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal for all new incoming students

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#) 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

Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School provides education exclusively for girls and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this 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. A student applying to the ASD Class.
2. Students living in the parish of Rosbercon will be accepted first
3. A sister of a present or past student.
4. A daughter of a past pupil.
5. A daughter of a present or past member of the teaching staff of this school.
6. A girl, not from the parish attending a Primary school in the Parish.

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:

1. In the event that the school is oversubscribed students will be accepted according to their date of application
2. All other applicants will be placed on a waiting list in order of their date of application.

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:

- 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;
- 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 or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of her family attending or having previously attended the school;

(Other than, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents of a student having attended the school. In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

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. This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary 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 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 Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School, 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.

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.

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 Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary 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 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 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).

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 Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary 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.

Placement on the waiting list of Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary 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 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.

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.

15. 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:

TRANSFERS FROM OTHER SECOND LEVEL SCHOOLS

Applications to transfer into other year groups are open to female students only.

Students may transfer into the school at any time subject to:

- *The school's Admissions Policy*
- *The school regarding the move in the best interests of our present students and of the student wishing to transfer*
- *Available space*
- *Consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer if appropriate*
- *The Board of Management being satisfied with the reasons for the proposed transfer. In this regard the school will require in writing from the students former/present school a detailed Attendance Record for the past year. Academic Records for the past year will also be required as will a detailed Discipline Report covering the student's time in the school outlining any breaches of discipline.*
- *An application to transfer into this school must be made on the official Application Form.*

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:

Students may transfer into the school at any time subject to:

- *The school's Admissions Policy*
- *The school regarding the move in the best interests of our present students and of the student wishing to transfer*
- *Available space*
- *Consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer if appropriate*
- *The Board of Management being satisfied with the reasons for the proposed transfer. In this regard the school will require in writing from the students former/present school a detailed Attendance Record for the past year. Academic Records for the past year will also be required as will a detailed Discipline Report covering the student's time in the school outlining any breaches of discipline.*
- *An application to transfer into this school must be made on the official Application Form.*

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

The board of Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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

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.

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.

Signed for and on behalf of The Board of Management: S. Byrne Date: 22/9/21

Signed by The Principal: Teri O'Neil Date: 22/9/21

Policy Amended

Signed for and on behalf of The Board of Management: S. Byrne Date: 26-5-22.

Signed by The Principal: Teri O'Neil Date: 26/5/22