



St. Mary's Secondary School,
Holy Faith, Glasnevin, Dublin 11.

60770P



Ratified by the Board of Management June 2017

Admissions Policy and Enrolment Procedure

Type of School

St. Mary's Secondary School, Holy Faith Convent, Glasnevin is a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School for girls. Established by the Sisters of the Holy Faith, it now operates under the patronage of the Le Chéile Schools Trust.

Characteristic Spirit

St. Mary's Secondary School follows the Holy Faith philosophy of creating a school community whose central purpose is the religious, moral, intellectual, human, social and physical recreational education of the student. The education programme of the school is directed to the growth of the whole person. It aims to form integrated and self-reliant Christian people who are eager to build a better world. It is underpinned by the vision and values of the Le Chéile Charter.

St. Mary's Secondary School welcomes all students for whom the school can provide an appropriate education.

For further information on the Le Chéile Schools Trust and the Le Chéile Charter, see www.lecheiletrust.ie

Operating Context

St. Mary's Secondary School, Glasnevin, operates within the context of

- The legislation and regulations of the Department of Education and Skills
- The right of Trustees/Board of Management as set out in the *Education Act, 1998* (Section 15 (1), (2)), and
- The funding and resources available to the school at any given time

The school supports the following principles:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other educational needs as far as is practicable.
- Equality with respect to maximum access and participation in the school.
- Parental choice in relation to choice of school, having regard for the characteristic spirit of the school.
- Respect for the diversity of beliefs, languages, traditions and ways of life in society. (*Education Act 1998 (Section 15)*)

School Resources

- The financial and teaching resources of the school are provided by a combination of grants and teacher allocations from the Department of Education and Skills, voluntary contributions, and occasional fundraising
- Implementation of the school plan and school policy must have due regard to the resources and funding available

Voluntary Contribution

- As St Mary's Secondary School is a non-fee charging voluntary secondary school it relies heavily on the financial support of parents/guardians through the voluntary contribution that families pay each year. The voluntary contribution is currently set at €150.00 per annum. The Board of Management, while acknowledging the importance of parental contributions, emphasises that the offer and acceptance of a place in the school is not dependent in any way on a financial contribution to the school; no request for any financial contribution will be made until after the completion of the enrolment process.

Curricular Context

- St. Mary's Secondary School operates within the regulations of the Department of Education and Skills and follows the curricular programmes so prescribed, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the *Education Act, 1998*.

For information on the school's programmes and facilities, see www.stmaryshfcglasnevin.com

Day-To-Day Operation of the Policy

The Board of Management delegates the day-to-day implementation of the policy to the Principal.

Admission Statement

St. Mary's Secondary School shall not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on the grounds of civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community or in respect of the student concerned having special educational needs.

As St. Mary's Secondary School is an all-girls-school it is not deemed to be acting in a discriminatory manner when it refuses to enroll boys. In the circumstances where a student transitions from female to male, the school will discuss with the student and his parents the most appropriate way to respond to the needs of the student, within the resources available to the school and in the context of inclusiveness and respect for the unique dignity of each student.

Enrolment Procedures and Admissions Criteria

This section sets out the policy of the school with regard to enrolment procedures and admission criteria for entry into First Year 2018/19.

Students eligible for admission to First Year

To be eligible for admission to First Year, applicants must:

- Have reached the age of 12 years by 1st of January of the calendar year following entry into First Year (as required by Department of Education and Skills regulations)
- Have completed Sixth Class in Primary School or its equivalent
- Be willing, in conjunction with their parents/guardians, to accept the Characteristic Spirit of the school
- Be willing, in conjunction with their parents/guardians, to accept the school's Code of Behaviour
- Be willing to sit an Assessment Test, the date for which will be communicated in writing to the parents/guardians of the students accepted for enrolment at the school
- Be willing, in conjunction with their parents/guardians, to complete the detailed student data form that will be issued following acceptance for enrolment.

Code of Behaviour for Students

- St Mary's Secondary School has a detailed Code of Behaviour for students. It outlines the system of rewards and sanctions the school operates to promote a climate which facilitates the teaching and learning that is at the heart of the school's educational mission. It also outlines the procedures the school follows to suspend or expel a student and the relevant appeals procedure available to those who may wish to use it. The Code of Behaviour is available on the school's website:
<http://www.stmaryshfcglasnevin.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/St-Marys-Code-of-Behaviour.pdf>
Prospective students and their parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with the school's Code of Behaviour for Students, which they will be required to accept. They are further expected to support the school in its implementation and enforcement as appropriate in the context of justice and fairness to all parties.

Enrolment Procedures

- To apply, parents/guardians should complete the official St. Mary's Secondary School Application Form. Application forms will be sent to our feeder primary schools to facilitate distribution. The Principal and Guidance Counsellors will visit each of the feeder schools in early September. Application forms will also be available from the School Office.
- The application forms for entry into First Year in autumn 2018 will be available until **16th June 2017**.
- The closing date for receipt of completed applications for First Year for the academic year 2018/19 will be 4.00 pm on **23rd June 2017**.
- 1st round offers of places to students in the feeder schools will be made during the **last week in June 2017**.
- When an application form, properly completed and signed, is received, it will be stamped with the date on which it was received.
- Incomplete application forms will not be processed but will be returned to the parents/guardians.
- Late applications will be considered only after all applications received on time have been fully processed.

Allocation of Places in First Year 2018/19

Decisions regarding student admissions are a matter for the Board of Management.

As soon as possible but not later than 21 days after the closing date for receipt of completed application forms, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of each application, and inform the parents/guardians of the outcome in writing (as required by the *Education Welfare Act 2000*).

As a general principle and insofar as practicable, students that are eligible for admission will be enrolled on application provided places are available and that they are willing to attend the assessment process in February.

Taking into account the capacity, facilities and resources of the school, the Board of Management has decided that **a maximum of 150 places** will be available in First Year for the academic year 2018/19.

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed this number, the Board of Management will allocate places in accordance with the criteria and procedures outlined in **Appendix 1**.

When a place in the school is offered, parents/guardians will be required to confirm in writing their acceptance of the place. **If the place is not accepted by the date specified in the letter of offer, the offer will be withdrawn.** Parent/guardians will be expected to sign to confirm their acceptance of the school's Code of Behaviour.

There will be an Assessment Test in the second term of Sixth Class for incoming First Year students. Parents will be advised of the specific date by letter. All incoming First Year students must sit this assessment. Generally, this test is used to assess achievement levels in order to best facilitate students according to their needs.

There will be an Information Evening for parents/guardians of all incoming students. This is a vital part of the enrolment process. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are expected to attend this meeting.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases, such an exceptional case could include the following:

- The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education, or
- In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.

Where the Board of Management decides to refuse admission to the school, the parents/guardians of the student concerned may appeal the decision to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the *Education Act, 1998*. The appeal must generally be made within 42 calendar days of the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians. (See **Appendix 2**)

Students with Special Educational Needs

St. Mary's Secondary School, Glasnevin, welcomes applications from parents/guardians of students with special educational needs. The school will use the resources (finance and personnel) provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs and will ensure that these students are free to participate in the life of the school in so far as is reasonably practicable.

While recognising and fully supporting the rights of parents/guardians to have a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to provide for students with particular educational needs is dependent on resources suitable to those needs being supplied by the Department of Education and Skills. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make the Board of Management aware of any special needs as early as possible, as it may take some time for the Department to process applications for the resources needed. In order to determine the specific resources, facilities and learning support required, the Board will request a copy of the student's medical and/or psychological report. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the student relative to their special needs and to profile the support services required. In house screening to identify students requiring Learning Support as per DES 07/14 Circular will be carried out early in first year (See St Mary's SEN Policy).

Following receipt of the report, or results of screening that identify learning needs the Board will assess how the school can meet the needs of the students in question. The school will also request information from the student's primary school with regard to such matters as learning support and/or resource hours. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to admission, request the Department of Education and Skills to provide the resources necessary to meet the needs of the student as outlined in the psychological or medical report. The new allocation model which has been devised by a working group established by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and further developed by the Department of Education and Skills is aimed at providing better outcomes for students with special educational needs. It is based on the profiled educational need of each school and was introduced in September 2017.

A representative of the Board will meet with the parents/guardians of the student to discuss the student's needs and the school's capacity to meet them. It may be

necessary for the Board to postpone the attendance of a student at the school, pending the receipt of an assessment report, and/or the provision of appropriate resources by the Department of Education and Skills to meet the needs specified in the psychological or medical report.

The school commits itself to working closely with the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) to ensure that students with special needs are given every assistance possible, subject to available resources, to achieve their educational potential.

Transfer of a student from one school to another

St. Mary's Secondary School will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking transfer to our school from another post-primary school, or seeking to be admitted during the academic year whether from another Irish school or from abroad. Any application to transfer from another school should be made in writing. The Board of Management will decide on application for admission to any year other than First Year by applying criteria which could include all or some of the following:

- Was the application made in writing?
- Can the student be accommodated within current class sizes and school curricular policy?
- Is the application in agreement with the school's Admissions Policy?
- Would admission be of educational benefit to the student?
- What would be the likely impact on students already in the school?
- Have the circumstances leading to the application to transfer to St Mary's Secondary School been fully disclosed?
- Have parents/guardians of the student concerned given written authorisation to their child's previous school to provide full information on the student's record to-date?
- Are the reasons why the application is being made considered acceptable by the Board?
- Is the application supported by the Educational Welfare Officer?
- Would admission of the student be in accordance with the Health, Safety & Welfare at Work Act (1989)?
- Should a place be offered immediately or deferred until the beginning of the next academic year?

A decision about the transfer of the student to this school will be conveyed to the parents/guardians within 21 days of the date when all the required data has been received by the Principal.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse transfer into the school in cases where, for example, in the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property. The parents/guardians can appeal this decision in accordance with the appeal process set out later in Appendix 2.

Review

This policy is operative for the intake in the school year 2018/19. It will be reviewed by the Board of Management for subsequent years to take account of legislation and changing circumstances.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____29th June 2017____

It was agreed by the Le Chéile Schools Trust on _____.



Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Appendix 1: Allocation of Places

Taking into account the capacity, facilities and resources of the school, the Board of Management has decided that a **maximum of 150 places** will be available in First Year for the academic year 2018/19.

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed this number, the Board of Management will allocate places in accordance with the criteria and procedures outlined below.

Places will be allocated to eligible applicants in the following order:

- A) **Sisters of students currently attending St. Mary's Secondary School**
- B) **Daughters of current eligible school staff.** *Eligible staff* is defined as those non-casual employees who have been in the employment of the Board of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School, Glasnevin, for at least one year and who are reasonably expected to be still employed by the Board at the time their daughter commences in St. Mary's
- C) **Sisters of eligible past-pupils of St. Mary's Secondary School.** *Eligible past-pupils* is defined as those past pupils who completed at least two years in St. Mary's
- D) **Daughters of eligible past-pupils of St. Mary's Secondary School.** *Eligible past-pupil* is defined as those past pupils who completed at least two years in St. Mary's
- E) **Students from the following primary schools:**
 - St. Brigid's Primary School, Glasnevin
 - Mother of Divine Grace Primary School, Ballygall
 - St. Columba's Primary School, Iona Road
 - Corpus Christi Primary School, Homefarm Road
 - St. Canice's Primary School, Finglas
 - Our Lady of Victories Primary School, Ballymun Road
- F) **Other applicants**

Random Selection Process

When a stage in the allocation process is reached where the number of applicants within the next category to be dealt with exceeds the number of places remaining to be allocated, a **random selection process** will be used to select those students from the category to whom an offer of a place will be made.

The random process will be overseen by the Chairperson of the Board of Management and witnessed by a representative of the Le Chéile Schools Trust and an Independent Observer.

In the case of **Category E**, the random selection process will operate as follows:

- The number of places to be offered to students from each of the 6 feeder schools listed in Category E will be on a percentage pro-rata basis directly proportional to the number of applications received from each of the 6 named schools. *(For example, if 30% of the applications in Category E come from a particular feeder school, then 30% of the places available for Category E will be allotted to applicants from that feeder school.)*
- There will be 6 containers, one for each of the 6 feeder schools

- The name of each applicant in Category E will be placed in the appropriate container
- A member of the Board of Management will draw names from each container, one by one, until the maximum number of places allotted to each feeder school is reached. The order in which the names are drawn will be recorded on a numbered list. Places will be allocated in that order until the available places are filled
- The remaining names in the 6 containers will then be placed in a single container and a second random process will take place. A member of the Board of Management will draw names from the container to establish a single numbered waiting list.

In the case of any of the categories A, B, C, D or F, the random selection process will operate as follows:

- The name of each applicant in the category will be placed in a single container
- A member of the Board of Management will draw names from the container, one by one, until the container is empty. The order in which the names are drawn will be recorded on a numbered list. Places will be allocated in that order until available places are filled
- The remaining names will be placed on a numbered waiting list in the order in which they are drawn from the container
- In the event that no places remain to be allocated when a category is reached, then all of the names in that category will be placed on the numbered waiting list, using the same random process

Where there are applications from two or more siblings in the one random selection process, then upon selection of one of the siblings, all of the siblings' names will be deemed selected. Where there are insufficient places left in the relevant category, the name(s) of the remaining sibling(s) will be placed at the beginning of the single numbered waiting list.

The waiting list will operate until **30 September 2017**. In the event that any places become available prior to this deadline, through cancellation or other cause, they will be offered to those on the waiting list in number order, as determined by the random process.

If there are any unfilled places when all applications received on time have been dealt with, late applications will be considered. Available places will be allocated to late applications in order of the date of their receipt. If necessary, a random selection process will be used.

Appendix 2: Appeals Process

The Board of Management of a recognized school shall not refuse to admit as a student in such school a child, in respect of whom an application to be so admitted has been made, except where such refusal is in accordance with the policy of the recognized school concerned published under Section 15(2) (d) of the *Education Act 1998* and *Education Welfare Act 2000*, Section 19 (1).

Should a student's application for admission to the school be refused, the parent/guardians have the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. (*Education Act 1998*, section 29(d)). The parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the Board's decision and the reasons why the student was not accepted will be clearly stated. An application form for such an appeal will be provided. The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management is notified to the parents/guardians concerned. (*Circular M48/01*).

The appeal should be made in writing on Application Form supplied. The Appeals Application Form should be completed in full and should state:

1. The decision being appealed.
2. The grounds on which the decision is being appealed.
3. The date that the parents/guardian were informed of the decision.
4. All other relevant information (*Circular M48/01*).

The school must be informed in writing of the decision to appeal.

The appeal should be addressed to:

Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit,
Department of Education and Skills,
Friar's Mill Road,
Mullingar,
County Westmeath.