



*This enrolment policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998). The Board of Management trusts that this will assist parents in relation to enrolment matters.*

## **A. School Profile**

### **School Details**

School of the Divine Child,  
Lavanagh Centre,  
Ballintemple,  
Cork

Roll No. 18483W

Tel. 021 4291804 (9.30am-12.00 noon Monday to Friday)

E: [schoolofdivinechild@gmail.com](mailto:schoolofdivinechild@gmail.com)

Opening Hours: 9.20am-3.00pm Monday to Friday

The School of the Divine Child provides primary and second level curriculum to students with physical disabilities as well as students with any learning ability who for various reasons may require short term or long term support because of medical, care or social needs.

### **School Ethos**

The denominational character of the school is Roman Catholic and the Patron is Bishop Buckley, Diocese of Cork and Ross. The ethos of the school is Christian and in this atmosphere the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical growth of the pupils is nurtured.

Within the context and parameters of Department regulations and circulars, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act 1998, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness,
- Equality of access and participation in the school;
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment;
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and ways of life in society.

### **Staff**

The current staff team comprises 5 teachers including a Principal Teacher and classroom teachers, as well as 3 part-time teachers of Home Economics, Music and PE/swimming, and 7 Special Needs Assistants. The school also has a part-time secretary and a number of bus escorts. A full time Nurse and 3 nursing unit staff support the students in School through funding received by our partners Enable Ireland.

### **Funding**

The school depends on the grants and resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and it operates under the Rules for National Schools, the Education Act 1998, and within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department in the form of circulars. In addition the school receives some support services (in particular, one nurse and 3 nursing unit care staff) from our partners on site, Enable Ireland.

### **Curriculum**

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills. The primary school curriculum is adapted by our Teachers to meet the needs of individual students. In senior school, students follow the Junior Cycle programme and are offered opportunities to sit state examinations. The Junior Cycle programme includes projects such as Make a Book and a number of JCSP initiatives. The School also offers Level 2 Learning Programmes under the new Junior Cycle Initiative. Our School Leavers programme prepares students for the world of work and further education and includes an opportunity to achieve FETAC accreditation.

All of our classrooms have access to the internet and have touch sensitive interactive whiteboards and we have access to a wide variety of software and assistive technology devices.



**Code of Behaviour**

The school has a Code of Behaviour and an Anti- Bullying Policy, which is regularly reviewed. Pupils enrolled in the school are required to co-operate with and support the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy as well as all policies relating to curriculum, organisation and management.

The Board of Management places parents/guardians responsible for ensuring that their child co-operates with such policies in as appropriate a way as is feasible having due regard to the development state and level of maturity of the individual.

The enrolment of a child in the school is an acceptance by the child and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) of the school's Code of Behaviour.

**Total Enrolment and Pupil/Teacher Ratio**

The pupil to teacher ratio for the school is 6:1. A trend of increasing numbers seeking enrolment after the commencement of the school year means that some classes may be declared full once a maximum figure is reached.

The Board of Management reserves the right to place a cap on the number of pupils in any/all classes in any given year. This decision will be guided by

- The needs of the pupils
- Considerations of Health and Safety
- The availability of the appropriate resources



## **B. Enrolment Policy**

### **Introduction**

In introducing its enrolment policy, the Board of Management of School of the Divine Child is doing so with reference to the Rules for National Schools, The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), enacted sections of The Education of Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004), all relevant equality and data protection legislation and Department of Education and Skills (DES) Circulars.

### **Enrolment Procedure**

Enquiries in relation to enrolment may be made by in a variety of ways, e.g. by phone, letter, personal visit from parent(s) or another school/ professional agency ó NEPS, HSE, etc. However none of these constitute an application. The formal application form is available from the school.

- Applications will be accepted from January 10<sup>th</sup> ó 31<sup>st</sup> May of the year of enrolment.
- Applicants may be accepted during the year in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Board of Management.

*An application will only be considered when all relevant documentation and a completed signed application form have been received. A checklist is provided with the application form. Submission of a completed application form does not guarantee a place.*

### **Criteria for enrolment**

Children are eligible for admission to the school if they fulfil any of the following criteria:

- If they have been assessed with a physical disability, and this is the primary diagnosis.
- If they present with any learning ability and they require short term or long term support because of medical, care or social needs
- If the opinion of the Board of Management is that their educational and social needs can be met in School of the Divine Child within the existing resource allocation

*Pupils with support needs for behaviour will be enrolled provided that the Board of Management can assure the wellbeing, safety and health of all members of the school community can be adequately safeguarded. If necessary a risk assessment will be undertaken as part of the decision making process.*

### **Reports to accompany the application**

Before a child is considered for enrolment in School the Board of Management will require an up to date Psychological Report which outlines the child's needs. The report should state how these needs might be best met in a school for pupils such as School of the Divine Child. In the absence of clear recommendations the report may be referred back to the Psychologist for clarification

Copies of other reports/assessments, where relevant, e.g. medical, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, social and school reports (including IEPs), must also be made available to the Board of Management as part of the application procedure.

All relevant information will be considered in assisting the Principal in making a recommendation to the Board of Management. The final decision rests with the Board of Management. Any information thus provided will be retained subject to the usual rules of confidentiality and applicable regulations.

### **Process**

Applications will be processed in the first instance by the Admissions Team (Principal & Deputy Principal). The application will be referred to Enable Ireland and the School Nurse in order to assess the level of support service a child may need in School. In line with the School/Enable Ireland's joint admission protocols we also ask parents to apply for a minimum of Nurse Support from Enable Ireland.

As part of the admissions process a copy of the child's birth certificate and the child's PPS number must be obtained and in the event of enrolment will be retained in the school records.

The Principal, or another member of staff designated by the Principal, may contact or visit the prior school of the applicant. The applicant's disciplinary record will be considered as part of the process. At all times the welfare of the other members of the school community, and, in particular, the existing class group will be taken into consideration.



The school will usually meet with the parent/legal guardians of the applicant to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability and/or capability in meeting those needs.

Where the Admissions Team recommends offering a place to an applicant, that recommendation will be communicated to the Board for final approval at its next meeting. Where the Admissions Team recommend refusal of an application the reasons for that recommendation will be communicated by the Principal to the Board of Management. The final decision on admission is always made by the Board of Management.

The Board of Management will endeavour to communicate decisions re applications in writing to the parent/guardian within 21 days of the School receiving all relevant information as detailed above and in the checklist supplied with each application form.

### **C. Appeals**

If the Board of Management refuses to enrol a student in the School, the parent/guardian of the student may appeal the decision to the Board. The Appeal must be submitted within 10 days of the date of the refusal to enrol. It must be made in writing, addressed to the Chairperson of the Board, and clearly state the ground for the appeal. The Board of Management will respond within 10 days of the receipt of such an appeal.

If, following the conclusion of the appeal procedures at school level, a parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the decision made, that parent/guardian has a statutory entitlement under section 29 of the Education Act (as amended by section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, to appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. It should be noted that such an appeal must be lodged within 42 days of the School's refusal to enrol.

Appeals may be made on the Appeals Application Form, available from the school, within 42 calendar days of receipt of the Board's decision. This form is also available on the Department's website at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

***Note*** *Acceptance for enrolment is not a guarantee of provision of transport. An application for transport is forwarded to the SENO and the DES on behalf of the pupil. However, the Board of Management has no role in the decision making process.*

### **D. Exceptional Cases**

The Board of Management of the School of the Divine Child reserves the right to refuse enrolment or, to rescind an offer of enrolment to any child, in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

- In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to School staff or to School property *or*
- In the opinion of the Board of Management, even with additional resources, the School cannot provide the student with an appropriate education.

### **E. Policy approval/ratification**

The contents of this policy have been approved by the Board of Management, School of the Divine Child.

Signature of Chairperson: Miriam Murphy      Date: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016

### **F. Review**

This policy will be reviewed in the academic year 2016-17 or sooner if required.