**Admission Policy of School of the Divine Child**

**School Address: Lavanagh Centre, Park Avenue, Ballintemple, Cork T12 NT26 Roll number: 18483W**

**School Patron/s: Bishop of Cork and Ross**

# Introduction

The policy was approved by the school patron on May 8th, 2020. 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 School of the Divine Child 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.

# Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

**The school of the Divine Child is designated by the Department of Education and Skills as a school for pupils with multiple physical disabilities and complex medical and health care needs. Our pupils require specialised support from our School Nurse(s) and a trained team of nursing care support workers. This ensures that all our pupils regardless of their multiple physical disabilities, cognitive impairment and complex medical need are provided with the opportunities to access the education Curriculum to their full potential and in a meaningful way.**

The denominational nature of the school is Roman Catholic, and the ethos of the school is Christian. We welcome and accept pupils and families from all faiths and none. Pupils are nurtured and offered education in a positive atmosphere, that promotes spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical growth.

The School of the Divine Child, Lavanagh will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004, relating to the provision of education to children with special education needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

The School of the Divine Child, Lavanagh will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under 37 A and any direction served on the board under section 67 (4B) of the Education Act.

As a school we strive to ensure the principles of:

- inclusiveness,

-equality of access and participation in the school,

-a safe and secure environment for learning, and

-respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

1. **Admission Statement**

The School of the Divine Child will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

* 1. the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
  2. the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
  3. the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
  4. the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
  5. the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
  6. the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
  7. the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
  8. the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
  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.

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

**The school of the Divine Child is designated by the Department of Education and Skills as a school for pupils with multiple physical disabilities and complex medical and health care needs. Our pupils require specialised support from our School Nurse(s) and a trained team of nursing care support workers. This ensures that all our pupils regardless of their multiple physical disabilities, cognitive impairment and complex medical need are provided with the opportunities to access the education Curriculum to their full potential and in a meaningful way.**

1. **Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

1. the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#_bookmark0) below for further details)
2. 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 he/she/they or he/she they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student.

Additional information must be included (as applicable) in this section.

**School of the Divine Child provides an education exclusively for students with multiple physical disabilities and complex medical and health care needs as a result of Syndromes (Genetic Conditions), Acquired brain injury and pupils with high physical disabilities. , We may refuse admission to a student, where the student does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this school.**

# Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

If 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:

* **Prioritise students who require specialised expertise in all areas of assistive technology and/or augmentative communication systems to access the curriculum.**

1. **Siblings of pupils already enrolled in the School.**
2. **Draw for places.**

# 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:

Points (a) to (g) must be included here by all schools. There are limited exceptions to some of these (highlighted in red below) and schools must retain the exceptions that apply to them and delete those that do not:

1. a student’s prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
2. the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
3. a student’s academic ability, skills or aptitude;
4. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student’s parents;
5. a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
6. a student’s connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;
7. 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.

# Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to School of the Divine Child 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](#_bookmark2) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#_bookmark3) 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.

# 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](#_bookmark4) below for further details).

# Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from School of the Divine Child, you must indicate—

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 concerned and
2. 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.

# 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 School of the Divine Child where—

1. it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
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.
3. 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
4. an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of ‘acceptance of an offer’ as set out in [section 10](#_bookmark1) above.

# 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 certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

# 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 School of the Divine Child 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 School of the Divine Child 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.

# 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.

# 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:

Intake in School of the Divine Child includes places in

-infants,

-primary

-post-primary to 16 years of age

-post-primary 16-18 years of age.

Vacancies in each section will form part of the Admissions Notice for School of the Divine Child

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:

Where a vacancy arises waiting lists will apply in four areas:

-infants

-primary

-post-primary to 16 years of age

-post primary 16-18 years of age

A waitlist will apply in each section and places offered in order of date of application received.

1. **Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees**

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of School of the Divine Child or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

1. an application for admission of a student to the school, or
2. the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

# Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school’s arrangements for students, where the parent~~s~~ or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

Students will be moved to another class/ multisensory area for the duration of the period of religious instruction.

# 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.

Dave Ronayne,

Chairperson, Board of Management