



---

**ST. CATHERINE'S SENIOR SCHOOL  
DOMINICAN CONVENT SCHOOL  
ADMISSION POLICY 2020 (REVISED DECEMBER 2025)**

---

**Admission Policy of St. Catherine's Senior School  
Dominican Convent School  
Ratoath Road, Cabra, Dublin 7**

**Roll number: 17465P**

**School Patron: Archbishop Dermot Farrell**

## **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.

This policy was revised in September 2024 for the opening of our ASD class in December 2024. It is now being revised again in November 2025 to reflect our change of status from an all-girls school to a co-educational school from September 2026. From September 2026, St. Catherine's Senior School shall admit boys to 2nd Class. Over a period of five years, the school will phase in co-educational classes on a 'year on year' basis and become a fully co-educational school from 2nd to 6th Class from September 2030.

This policy was approved by the school patron on 26th February 2026. Amendments were previously added in January 2023 to comply with Circular 0075/2022. 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 St. Catherine's Senior 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**

St. Catherine's Senior School is a coeducational Catholic primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary 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 for the pupils 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 St. Catherine's Senior 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.

The Mission Statement and general objectives of St. Catherine's Senior School:

St. Catherine's Senior School is a Catholic School in the Roman Catholic tradition.

St. Catherine's School is a community centred on Christ, the Perfect Teacher and model for all Christian educators. Our motto is Truth and our aim is to lead our pupils to Truth in word and action.

- We strive to make our school a genuine Faith-community where the Christian values of the Gospel find daily expression in all our policies and practices.
- We aim to work in partnership with parents to develop the gifts and to meet the needs of all.
- We recognise that each pupil is unique and has different gifts as well as different needs. Our wish is to enable the release of the positive potential within each pupil by offering a relevant curriculum in an atmosphere characterised by care and justice.
- We urge special concern for those who are emotionally, materially, or educationally disadvantaged, including those with special educational needs.
- We try to develop within our pupils an inner discipline leading to a wholesome respect for themselves and authority. A caring attitude towards the environment and the whole of creation is cultivated.
- We welcome the parish clergy into close collaboration with us so that, together, we can strengthen our spiritual ministry and pastoral care to all within our school community. It is our wish that our pupils leave us with enhanced self-confidence and self-discipline.

### **3. Admission Statement**

St. Catherine's Senior 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.

During the change of status phasing in process (from Sept 2026-Sept 2030), St. Catherine's Senior School does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to a class level not yet co-educational under the agreed terms of the change of status.

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

St. Catherine's Senior School will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council. St. Catherine's Senior School will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

St. Catherine's Senior School opened an ASD class in March 2025 with the approval of Minister for Education. This class provides an education exclusively for students with a category of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class, a student who does not have the category of needs specified. This class is being established to provide an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

#### **5. Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school/ASD Class is oversubscribed (please see Section 7 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
- c) St. Catherine's Senior School is a Roman Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
- d) The special class attached to St. Catherine's Senior School provides an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the

school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

- e) The Autism Class has a maximum capacity of six pupils in one class. In setting up the class, the Board of Management is committed to developing an educational setting which is focused on the needs of pupils and enables learning to take place in a safe environment, in which pupils learn a range of skills that will facilitate their making a gradual transition into mainstream classes with their own age cohort. Parental involvement in the pupil's learning is encouraged and valued. It ensures consistency between the student's various learning environments. The teaching methodologies employed in the class will be those that are deemed most appropriate to the individual pupil's learning needs.
- f) From September 2026, St. Catherine's Senior School shall admit boys to 2nd Class. Over a period of five years, the school will phase in co-educational classes on a 'year on year' basis and become a fully co-educational school from 2nd to 6th Class from September 2030. During the phasing in process, St. Catherine's Senior School will not admit a boy applying for admission to a class level not yet co-educational under the agreed terms of the change of status.

## **6. Criteria for Admission to the Autism Class**

The following is the school's eligibility criteria for admission to the Autism Class:

- a) Parents who wish to enrol their child in the Autism Class must indicate this in the relevant section on the enrolment application form.
- b) Children are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism when the following is provided with the application form:

Up to date (within 24 months of date of application) professional report outlining:

- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report)
  - A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports
  - Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same
  - A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.
- c) Priority will be given to current students of the school who have accepted or are attending a mainstream class in St. Catherine's Senior School who meet age criteria as detailed in Admissions Notice (to correspond with current enrolees).

Parents must note that a guarantee of supports by outside agencies e.g. (HSE) cannot be provided. The school does not have the resources to provide or follow up on these services.

### **Procedures after application form has been received for the ASD Class**

- a) On the receipt of a completed application by the school, the child's name will be placed on the list of applicants for a place in the Autism Class of St. Catherine's Senior School.
  - b) When a complete application is submitted, the date and time of receipt are noted on the application form and an acknowledgement is given indicating that the application has been received.
- The Board of Management will decide on the acceptance or otherwise of the application. In the event that there are more applications than there are places, unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list, and when a place becomes available the child will be offered a place in accordance with our enrolment criteria. The waiting list will be maintained only for the duration of the academic year, for which the application was made.
  - If offered a place, the parents must confirm in writing within 21 calendar days of the date on the letter that the place is being accepted. If this confirmation is not received within that time, the school will take it that the place is not being accepted and the place will be allocated to another applicant.
  - If offered a place, the parents and the applicant are invited to a meeting with the Autism Class coordinator and are encouraged to bring reports from the applicant's present educational setting to this meeting.
  - A process of phased attendance to the class will operate for students.

### **Placement and Continuing Placement of a Pupil in the Class**

- The individual needs of each student are constantly reviewed to ensure that the ASD class is the appropriate setting to meet the student's needs. A review of each student's progress and his/her School Support Plan (SSP) will be carried out in consultation with parents and other professionals where necessary.
- The school reserves the right to review the student's progress at the end of each academic year to determine whether the class continues to be an appropriate placement for him/her.

### **Transition from the ASD Class into Mainstream**

- Arrangements for students' inclusion into a mainstream class will be made according to their level of need and attainments. School personnel will decide when inclusion into a mainstream setting is appropriate.

### **Refusal to Enrol**

- The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any applicant who does not comply with the terms of the Admissions Policy.

## **7. 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:

### **Selection Criteria for Mainstream Classes**

#### **Priority Category 1:**

Children who have attended St. Catherine's Infant School resident in the parish<sup>1</sup> – Cabra West

#### **Priority Category 2:**

Siblings of children already enrolled in the school resident in the parish<sup>2</sup> - Cabra West. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

#### **Priority Category 3:**

Children of staff. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

#### **Priority Category 4:**

Children living outside the parish but in Dublin 7. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

#### **Priority Category 5:**

Children living outside Dublin 7 but in close proximity to the school. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

#### **Priority Category 6:**

All other children. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

As St. Catherine's Senior School is a co-educational primary school from 2nd class upwards, only children from 2nd class to 6th class will be enrolled. No pupil will be older than thirteen years of age during their last year in the school.

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:

In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

---

<sup>1</sup> Proper documentation as determined by the Board of Management will have to be provided to prove their residency status in the parish area.

<sup>2</sup> Proper documentation as determined by the Board of Management will have to be provided to prove their residency status in the parish area.

Places will be offered in accordance with the class average directives for DEIS Band 1 schools issued by the Dept. of Education.

### **Selection Criteria for ASD Class**

#### **Priority Category 1:**

Children currently enrolled in our mainstream classes with a recommendation for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school.

#### **Priority Category 2:**

Children who have previously attended the ASD class in St. Catherine's Infant School with a recommendation for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school.

#### **Priority Category 3:**

Siblings of children attending St Catherine's Senior School with a recommendation for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school.

#### **Priority Category 4:**

Children living in the Cabra West<sup>3</sup> parish with a recommendation for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school.

#### **Priority Category 5:**

Children living outside the parish but in Dublin 7<sup>4</sup> with a recommendation for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school.

#### **Priority Category 6:**

Children living outside Dublin 7 but in close proximity to the school<sup>5</sup> with a recommendation for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school.

#### **Priority Category 7:**

All other children with a recommendation for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school.

As St. Catherine's Senior School is a co-educational primary school for children in 2<sup>nd</sup> class upwards, only children from 2<sup>nd</sup> class to 6<sup>th</sup> class will be enrolled. No pupil will be older than thirteen years of age during their last year in the school.

---

<sup>3</sup> Proper documentation as determined by the Board of Management will have to be provided to prove their residency status in the parish area.

<sup>4</sup> Proper documentation as determined by the Board of Management will have to be provided to prove their residency status in the parish area.

<sup>5</sup> Proper documentation as determined by the Board of Management will have to be provided to prove their residency status in the parish area.

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:

In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

## **8. 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
- (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 their 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 his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; other than siblings of a student attending or having attended the school as per Enrolment Criteria.
- (g) 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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists.

## **9. Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Catherine's Senior 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 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#) 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.

## **10. 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 19 below for further details).

## **11. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Catherine's Senior 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.

## **12. 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 St. Catherine's Senior 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 11 above.

### **13. 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.

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 her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

### **14. 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 St. Catherine's Senior 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 St. Catherine's Senior 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.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

### **15. 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 no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be

offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 14.

## **16. 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, i.e. Second Class, are as follows:

The procedures and selection criteria used in relation to such applications will comply with the School Attendance Policy and pupils seeking admission shall be admitted other than where the school is oversubscribed, or where one of the other specific circumstances, as set out in the act, apply.

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:

Late applicants will be offered a place unless the school is oversubscribed, or where one of the other specific circumstances, as set out in the act, apply.

A transfer form must be completed on behalf of the applicant.

In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 14 above.

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

The board of St. Catherine's Senior School or any persons acting on its behalf will not 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.

## **18. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents have 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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

## 19. Reviews/appeals

### **Review of decisions by the board of Management**

The parent of 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, 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.

This approved Admission Policy has been noted in the Board of Management Minutes.

Signed



Fr. Paul Thornton

Fr. Paul Thornton

Chairperson



Elaine Haverty

Elaine Haverty

Principal

26/2/26

Date

26/02/26

Date