



Our Lady of Mercy Convent School

Rosemount Terrace, Booterstown, Co. Dublin, A94V656

☎ 01 2884223 ✉ ourladyofmercyoffice@gmail.com ☐ <http://www.ourladyofmercy.ie>

Admission Policy

Our Lady of Mercy Convent School

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. 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 Mercy Convent 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 Mercy Convent School is an all-girls primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archdiocese 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, 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.

Our Lady of Mercy Convent School provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and such ethos and 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 Mercy Convent 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.



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The mission statement of Our Lady of Mercy Convent School is:

*To educate, encourage and celebrate our children and the wider school community as
together we grow in mind, body and spirit.
Tá ár dTiarna linn.*

Our school aims to provide the best possible environment to cater for the cultural, educational, moral, physical, religious social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions of all its students. The focus of the school philosophy is the education of the whole child to reach her full potential. We show special concern for the disadvantaged, respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each person. Working together as a school community, the Board of Management, Principal, staff, parents/guardians and pupils will strive to provide an environment, which will allow all students to develop to their maximum potential and fulfil their role in society.

Furthermore, the school recognises the central role of the family as the primary educator of the child.

3. Admission Statement

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

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



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

Our Lady of Mercy Convent School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who is not Roman Catholic and has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

4. 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
- (c) except where Our Lady of Mercy which provides education exclusively for girls and may refuse to admit as a student who is not of the gender provided for by this school.
- (d) Our Lady of Mercy Convent School is a Catholic school. In certain circumstances, the school may prioritise admission of students who support its Catholic ethos, where this is considered necessary to uphold the characteristic spirit of the school.

5. 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:

Priority	Criterion
1.	Priority is given to siblings and step siblings of pupils who are currently attending Our Lady of Mercy Convent School, Booterstown or St. Mary's BNS, Booterstown and children of the traditional Booterstown Parish area and traditional Merrion Rd. Parish area Priority is given to children from oldest to youngest in age.
2.	2.1 Children of current staff members in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School or St. Mary's BNS. Priority is given to children from the oldest to the youngest in age. 2.2 All other children, outside of the traditional Booterstown Parish area and traditional Merrion Rd. Parish area, who apply to the school are entitled to a place if there are vacancies in the school after the groups from category (1) and (2.1) been allocated places.



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Priority is given to children from oldest to youngest in age.

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:

- **priority will be given to children within the particular category in order of age, starting with the eldest. If there are two applicants with the same date of birth this will be decided by a draw by an independent person and not the Chairperson of the Board.**

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

Our Lady of Mercy Convent School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established one class to provide an education exclusively for girls with a diagnosis of autism/ autism spectrum disorder using the DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 criteria as set out by a professional or individual approved by the Department of Education and Skills.

The Special Class in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School was established in September 2026, for girls with autism, who fulfil the criteria for admission to the Special Classes and who would find it challenging to attend the mainstream classroom on a full-time basis. This class is an integral part of Our Lady of Mercy Convent School. The girls in the Special Classes will be integrated into the day-to-day activities of the school insofar as possible and they will partake in as many school-related activities as they can, in line with their needs.

As the Special Class is an integral part of Our Lady of Mercy Convent School, all Plans and Policies of the Plean Scoile apply to this class. It is not deemed necessary to re-iterate these in this policy. Such plans and policies as may need to be adapted for the girls in the Special Classes, will be discussed by the Principal/ Deputy Principal and the parents of the girls in the Special Class and the Board of Management as appropriate.

Please note, we are an all-girls' Mainstream school with designated autism classes and in certain circumstances, we will not be in a position to enrol girls with very complex needs as we are not a special school.

In accordance with the regulations as set down by the Department of Education and Skills, there are six places available for girls with ASD in each class, who meet the criteria for placement in our special needs class.

Our Lady of Mercy Convent 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. Our Lady of Mercy



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Convent school will comply with any direction served on the Board or the Patron under section 37A and 67(4B) of the Education Act.

A. Criteria for Admission in the Special Classes in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School:

1. Girls already enrolled in the school who meet the criteria outline in Circular 0039/2025 below.
2. As Our Lady of Mercy Convent School is an all-girls' school, only girls will be considered for Admission in the Special Class.
3. In line with Circular 0039/2025, the girl must have the following with their application for admission to the special classes in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School:

A Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report)
AND
- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the girl's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports
AND
- Given the severity or complexity of the girl's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the girl's needs, along with the rationale for same
AND
- A letter of eligibility from the NCSE confirming that the girl is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.

4. A fully completed application form must be filled in by the parents. All relevant reports from all professionals and services dealing with the child should accompany the application form.
5. Parents must accept, in writing, the Code of Behaviour pertaining to Our Lady of Mercy Convent School.
6. It is our vision that each girl in the Special Classes will be enabled to integrate with the mainstream according to her ability and capacity. Insofar as possible in each individual case, the girls in the Special Classes will be integrated into the day-to-day activities of the mainstream school and will participate in school-related activities according to their abilities.
7. The school will request the resources to meet the special educational needs of the girl who wishes to be enrolled in the Special Classes of Our Lady of Mercy Convent School.
8. The completion of an application form does not constitute an offer of a place in any class in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School. In line with legislation, parents will be informed of the decision of the Board of Management within 21 days of receipt of a complete application. Parents will be informed, in writing, of the Board's decision and will be given a period of two weeks in which to accept an offer of a place in the Special Class in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School.

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that all appropriate documentation required by the school is submitted with the application form.

Over subscription to the ASD special class



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In the event of there being more applications for places in the ASD special class then the following will apply:

1. Priority is given to pupils who are currently enrolled in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School, and who meet all the eligibility criteria for admission to a special class.
2. Priorities given to siblings and step siblings of children already enrolled in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School or Saint Mary; Boys National School and children resident in the traditional Booterstown Parish area and the traditional Merrion Road area . (The eldest child will have priority in the ranking). In the event of two or more girls being tied for a place, the eldest child will be given priority. If 2 applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.
3. Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date outlined in the admissions notice, will be placed at the end of the above waiting list in order of the date of receipt of such applications.

Meeting with parents and children

- Meetings will be held with parents and their daughter seeking admission to a Special Class, after the offer of a place, to discuss the individual needs of the child. After the offer of a place, permission will be sought from the parents to visit the child's pre-school placement (where relevant) with a view to speaking to staff members about the child's needs, academic/social development and capabilities and how best we can support their daughter in Our Lady of Mercy Convent School.
- After the offer of a place, it is recommended that parents give permission for school staff to consult with other professionals working with their daughter and that a schedule for the child to transition into this school will be agreed with parents and school staff.

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) 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 his or 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 siblings attending the school)
- (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.



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8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Our Lady of Mercy Convent 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 Mercy Convent 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.

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 Mercy Convent School if:



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- (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 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 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 mercy Convent 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.



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Placement on the waiting list of Our Lady of Mercy Convent 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 **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.

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 and admission of students after the commencement of the school year are in accordance with the procedures previously laid out in this policy. The admission of these pupils is dependent also upon:

- The overall numbers in the school
- The number of children in a particular class grouping

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

The board of Our Lady of Mercy Convent 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where parents have requested that the student attend the school without participation in 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 parents of the student to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.



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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.

19. **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.

20. **School and BOM Recommendations:**

The School and Board of Management will recommend that students enrolling in Junior Infants try, where possible, to complete two years of ECSE, to assist their socialisation into school.



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Maire McHugh

Signed: _____ **(Chairperson)**

Dated: 07/05/2026 (Chairperson)

John O'Boyle

Signed: _____ **(Principal)**

Dated: 07/05/2026 (Principal)