



## **Admission Policy of St. Francis Junior School**

**Clonshaugh Drive, Priorswood, Dublin 17**

**17104G**

**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.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 31/01/2023. 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. Francis Junior 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. Francis Junior School is a Catholic co-educational primary school under the patronage of Archbishop Dermot Farrell .

'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:

- \* *the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects*
- \* *a living relationship with God and with other people*
- \* *a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus*
- \* *the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith whilst also providing:*
- \* *religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church 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) 9b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of Francis Junior School shall uphold and be accountable to the patron or so upholding 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.*

At the heart of our learning community is the holistic development of each child and we endeavour to help each child reach his / her full physical, social, emotional, spiritual and academic potential.

We strive to achieve this in a safe, structured, positive and caring community.

The school's Mission Statement ( as adopted in 1990 ) is:

*'Our aim is to create a welcoming school, committed to nurturing children in partnership with our community in a respectful and inclusive environment.'*

The school's Vision Statement as (adopted in 1990 ) is:

*'We in St. Francis Junior School celebrate the unique qualities of all the children in our care and hope to assist each one of them to reach their full potential. By enhancing their self-esteem and self-confidence we will help them to develop an understanding of God's love and prepare them for their future role as a responsible child.'*

### **3. Admission Statement**

St. Francis Junior 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.

St. Francis Junior School 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 Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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. Francis Junior School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act’.

St. Francis Junior School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

St. Francis Junior School opens its ASD Class in September 2022. Please see below:  
Applications for Admission to ASD Class

In our mainstream classes we will endeavour to cater for all children, including those with special needs.

#### ***5. 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.

#### ***All denominational schools***

St. Francis Junior School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a

student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

### **6. Oversubscription**

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

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:

1. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and/or children resident in the parish of St. Francis of Assisi (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
2. Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
3. Children residing outside the parish ( the eldest child will also have priority)

Children must be aged 4 or over on the 1<sup>st</sup> September of the year of enrolment

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places 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.

### **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) 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 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 (up until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 only).

### ***8. Decisions on applications***

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Francis Junior 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.

### **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 St. Francis Junior 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 St. Francis Junior 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 10](#) above.

#### ***Applications for Admission to ASD Class:***

Enrolment in St. Francis Junior School for the purpose of attending an ASD Class is subject to the standard criteria by the Department of Education and Skills, following a diagnosis of autism as defined by DSM V or ICD-10.

Our Autism Classes are non-cognitive specific.

Thereafter the following criteria apply:

1. Children with ASD in a mainstream class in St. Francis Junior School who receive a recommendation for an ASD specific class.
2. Brothers and/or Sisters of current pupils in St. Francis Junior School or who have attended St. Francis Junior School in the past and who have a diagnosis of autism
3. Children resident in St. Francis Assisi Parish and who have a diagnosis of autism
4. Children who live in the adjacent parishes of Darndale, Coolock, Ayrfield, Kilbarrack,, Raheny, Donaghmede and Baldoyle and who have a diagnosis of autism
5. Applicants not covered by criteria 1 – 4 above and who have a diagnosis of autism

Children will only transition from one class to another following a review.

Children may gain admission to an ASD Class following submission to the Principal of appropriate documentation from approved services e.g. Early Intervention Services, HSE, St. Michael's House etc.

The application must be accompanied by a written psychological report recommending placement in an ASD class.

Children in our ASD Classes will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Dept. of Education & Skills and the HSE. These resources may include, for

example, access to the provision of any or a combination of the following: speech therapist, occupational therapist, behavioural therapist, home liaison nurse, psychologist, and psychiatrist. If the above services are not available or deemed inappropriate to the suitability of the placement or to meet the needs of the child, these will be considered in the annual review.

All placements for children in our ASD classes are subject to an annual review by the school and external services where appropriate.

### **Other considerations**

The maximum class size in the ASD Special Class is six pupils.

If the number of children on the list of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of places available, the criteria as laid out above will apply once a confirmed diagnosis of Autism has been provided by a qualified, approved professional and acceptable to the criteria as laid down by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).

The ASD unit will cater for children eligible for junior infants-2<sup>nd</sup> class only. This is to facilitate and enable children in the ASD unit to mix with their peers when/where possible and integrate with their assigned mainstream class as they progress from junior infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> class.

### **The first year will be used to:**

- Assess the child's educational needs
- Develop a Pupil Support File to address identified needs
- Assess whether the child's placement is appropriate

### **Aims of our ASD classes**

- To provide a quality driven, appropriate educational service to all children, within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education
- To enhance the communicative and social skills of the children
- To strive towards the integration of children in our ASD classes into mainstream education, having regard for levels of disability, available resources and suitability for such integration

### **Discharge Policy**

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from our ASD class once they have completed 4 years in total.

Discharge may also be recommended at any stage if the Board of Management, after consultation with the appropriate agencies and the parents/guardians, feels that placement is not appropriate.

Discharge from the ASD class may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

Currently there is no ASD unit in the adjoining senior school to cater for pupils 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> class.

**Parents will be notified about admission to the ASD classes on a case by case basis**

### ***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.

### ***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 St. Francis Junior 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. Francis Junior 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 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.

### ***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***

St. Francis Junior School will consider applications for the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group taking into account its admissions / over subscription criteria with regard to the maximum number of pupils catered for in each year group

St. Francis Junior School will consider applications for the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought taking into account its admissions / over subscription criteria with regard to the maximum number of pupils catered for in each year group



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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St. Francis Junior 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.

**Note:** Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

## **17. 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 parents 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:*

\* A written request should be made to the Principal of the school by the pupil's parents/ guardians.

\* A meeting will then be arranged with the parents / guardians to discuss how their request may be accommodated by the school.

## **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.

### 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.

**RATIFICATION OF POLICY**

Ratified at the Board of Management meeting on: 31.1.2023

Ann Copeland

Chairperson: Ann Copeland

Aileen Plunkett

Principal: Aileen Plunkett