

Admission Policy of Our Lady of Hope School

Armagh Road, Crumlin, Dublin 12

Roll Number: 20555K

School Patron: Archbishop Dermot Farrell, Catholic Archbishop of Dublin

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. This policy has been prepared by the Single Manager(s) of Our Lady of Hope School in respect of admission of students to the school for the school year 2021 - 2022.

The policy was approved by the School Patron on 18 June 2021. It will be published on the Dublin Diocesan website and can be downloaded or will be made available in hardcopy, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Our Lady of Hope's admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice that will be published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned. The admission notice for the 2021/22 school-year is currently available at <https://education.dublindiocese.ie/>

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

The application form for admission will be published on the Dublin Diocesan website on 30 June, 2021 and can be downloaded or will be made available in hardcopy, to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Our Lady of Hope School is a Catholic Co-Educational Special 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 harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the child, 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

(d) the formation of the children in the Catholic faith,

And which school provides religious education for the children 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) of the Education Act,1998 the Board of Management of Our Lady of Hope 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.

Mission Statement

Our Lady of Hope School is a co-educational school that provides education for students who require a special school placement.

We aim to provide a safe, secure and caring environment in which each student and staff member is valued and respected.

As members of a school community with a Catholic Ethos, we nurture the potential of each individual student and reflect Gospel Values in all our practices.

We believe that education happens best where there is dialogue, trust and partnership between parents, staff, students and management.

We offer a broad, balanced curriculum, designed to give students the opportunity to engage as fully as they can in all the riches of life whilst recognising their diverse abilities, characteristics, learning needs and styles.

Our schools Vision is that all students and staff realise their full potential in a safe, happy, stimulating and Christian environment where an attitude of respect for the good of the other is fostered.

The Irish Special School system is category specific. Within this system, Our Lady of Hope School is designated as a co-educational school for students with a diagnosis of Autism and Complex Needs. The student/teacher ratio is 6:1.

Students must be 4 years of age on or before 1 January of the year for which they are applying for admission.

Applications are considered on an individual basis giving due regard to both the characteristic designation of the school and the provision of adequate resources by the Department of Education and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Applications for enrolment should be directed to the Single Manager(s) until a Principal is appointed and a Board of Management has been established.

The school will follow the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

Within the resources available, Our Lady of Hope School will endeavour to empower each student to reach his/her full potential by working in active partnership with parents, teachers, ancillary staff, the admissions team, Department of Education, National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and Health Service Executive.

Students who require medicines or specific medical procedures of any sort are required to provide the school with signed parental/guardian consent stating the times and circumstances of when the medicine should be administered. An up to date medical report may be requested so that the school can assess its ability to cater for the student's medical needs. The school, in consultation with parents/guardians, may reassess its ability to meet the student's particular medical needs.

3. Admission Statement

Our Lady of Hope 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.

Our Lady of Hope School is a Catholic school whose objective is to provide education in an environment that 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

Our Lady of Hope School, with the approval of the Minister of Education, has been established to provide an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of Autism and Complex Needs.

5. Admission of Students

Enrolment for the school year 2021-2022 will be the responsibility of the Principal/Single Managers in consultation with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) until the Board of Management is established.

This school shall admit each eligible 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.

Our Lady of Hope School will provide an education exclusively for children with Autism and Complex Needs. The school may refuse admission to a student, where the student does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this school.

Application Procedure

The parent/guardian must apply in writing, completing an application form, furnishing the following documentation to the School Principal/Single Manager(s) and satisfying the enrolment criteria:

- Recent Psychological Assessment containing a definite diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Complex Needs,
- A recommendation within this report for a special school for students with Autism and Complex Needs,
- Copies of any other reports containing original additional diagnosis,
- Social History (where appropriate),

- Medical Report (where applicable),
- Psychiatric Assessment (where appropriate),
- Speech and Language Therapy Report (where applicable),
- Previous School related Reports/Individual Education Plans etc.,
- Any other relevant information.

An application will not be deemed completed until all requested documentation has been received.

Contact will be made with parents/guardians on receipt of this documentation.

Parents/Guardians of applicants who do not meet the criteria as set out in this policy will be notified in writing.

An offer of a place in our Lady of Hope School cannot be deferred from year to year.

Prior to actual admission the following certificates are required:

- Birth Certificate,
- Baptismal Certificate (if applicable).

The provision of transport will be sanctioned by the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO), the Department of Education and organised by the School Transport Services, Bus Éireann.

6. 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:

Category 1. Children with a diagnosis of Autism and Complex Needs resident in South Dublin, known to the NCSE who do not have an offer of a school place for September 2021.

Category 2. Siblings of students currently enrolled in the school, where these siblings have a diagnosis of Autism and Complex Needs and are resident in South Dublin.

Category 3. Other applicants whose normal place of residence is South Dublin, who have a diagnosis of Autism and Complex Needs and who have a recommendation for a Special School placement, prioritising youngest children first.

Category 4. All other applicants outside the catchment area of South Dublin who have a diagnosis of Autism and Complex Needs and who have a recommendation for a Special School placement.

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 unless it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned;
- 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/guardian, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- f. 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Our Lady of Hope 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 Lady of School Hope, 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 Hope School, applicants 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 are 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 Hope 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.

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 Hope 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 Our Lady of Hope 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 only be processed should a suitable place become available and where an offer cannot be made to an applicant on the waiting list (e.g. an age appropriate class placement). Late applications which are processed 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.

14. Late Eligible 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 Lady of Hope School's Admissions Policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late eligible 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 eligible applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available.

In the event that there is no place available, the name of the eligible applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

15. Procedures for admission of students during the school year

Eligible students may transfer to Our Lady of Hope School at any time during the school year, subject to the Admission Policy and availability of spaces. A parent/guardian who wishes to enrol his/her child is required to fill out an enrolment application form and follow the procedures outlined above.

The parent/guardian will be asked to provide reports/relevant information from the previous school and to give permission to this school to seek information, including relevant professional reports from the child's previous school as outlined in this policy.

It is a requirement of the Education Welfare Act Section 20 5 (a) (b) that information including the child's attendance and educational progress be communicated between schools.

Re-enrolment

“ A child removed from the rolls in accordance with the terms of Rule 64 of the Rules for National Schools, shall at any time after she/he was so removed and at the request of her/his parents or guardian, be re-enrolled in the school, notwithstanding any alteration to the enrolment policy in the school which may have been formulated during the period when the child was not on the rolls, and subject only to there being a place available in the school”.

Circular 4/97

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The Single Manager(s)/Board of Management 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

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/guardians 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. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent/guardian to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/Appeals

Review of decisions by the Single Manager(s)/Board of Management

The parent/guardian of a child, 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 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.

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

19. Review

This policy will be reviewed as required, depending on the developing nature of the school.

The policy was ratified by the Single Manager(s) on 23 June 2021.

It was published on the Education Section of the Dublin Diocesan Website

<https://education.dublindiocese.ie/> on 23 June 2021.

Sr. Bernadette Carron Sr. Maureen Matthews

Sr. Bernadette Carron / Sr. Maureen Matthews

Single Manager(s)