

Admission Policy of St. Joseph's Secondary School

School Address: Tulla, Co. Clare

Roll number: 62020f

School Patron/s: CEIST

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 _____. 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. Joseph's 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 St. Joseph's

St. Joseph's is a Catholic co-educational voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust).

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of St. Joseph's 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.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church which aims to promote:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, 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

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.

Catholic education is therefore a lifelong process of human growth and development which has been at the heart of the Church's mission since Jesus Christ urged his disciples to 'go teach all nations'. The person of Christ is the core of Catholic education.

St. Joseph's draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past, interpreted and lived out for students living in today's world. The charism of founder Catherine McAuley of the Mercy Order who began this school is of very significant importance in the life of the school.

As a CEIST school, St. Joseph's values teaching as one of the most important of all human activities. Our school seeks to build a quality learning community that welcomes, and bears witness to the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the CEIST Charter. These are encapsulated in the core values which are intended to support and nourish the lives of the people who are at the heart of our schools.

- ***Promoting Spiritual and Human Development***
- ***Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning***
- ***Showing Respect for Every Person***
- ***Creating Community***
- ***Being Just and Responsible***

St Joseph's is inspired by the words of Jesus Christ to his disciples, "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10). Because of this, St. Joseph's provides a rich, holistic education in the Catholic tradition where engagement with and development of the whole person; the intellectual, moral, religious, physical, spiritual and psychological are at the core of our practice.

Education has as its goal the formation of a human person who is free, rational and mature in relationships. offers educational opportunities St. Joseph's which promote excellence so that students can respond responsibly and creatively to their own lives, the lives of others and to the earth, which is our common home.

In St. Joseph's the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God is acknowledged and affirmed. The Catholic school is an inclusive community, ideally built on love and formed by the interaction and collaboration of its various components: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and members of the Board of Management. Catholic schools are also outward looking. They are connected to their local parish and Diocese and other local organisations which enrich the life of the

school. Our school draws on the rich resources of the local community and, in turn, contributes to the life of the local community.

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is central to our curriculum. Alongside Religious Education, the school supports the formation in faith of our students through many school-based experiences of prayer and ritual. All students' spiritual growth is further enhanced through such areas as sport, language, nature, art, poetry and music.

Mission Statement

St. Joseph's Secondary School, Tulla is a Catholic voluntary co-educational secondary school under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education – an Irish Schools Trust). We are a caring community which fosters belonging and self-worth while promoting academic and personal fulfilment.

St. Joseph's follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998). It operates within the regulations laid down by the DES, which may be amended from time to time. The school depends on the grants and resources provided by the DES, voluntary contributions and fund-raising and school policy in all areas must have regard to the resources and funding made available to us by the DES.

3. Admission Statement

St. Joseph's 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. Joseph's is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of Catholic denomination in preference to others.

St. Joseph's 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 of Catholic denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Joseph's is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories 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.

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

St. Joseph's with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with autism.

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

St. Joseph's is a catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special class attached to St. Joseph's provides an education exclusively for students with autism 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.

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:

- a. Siblings preference (brothers or sisters of present/past students).
- b. Children of established staff of St. Joseph's. Staff members will be deemed to be eligible if they are in the employment of the Board of Management on a non-casual basis, during normal school hours, having a contract for at least twelve months at the time their son/daughter commences St. Joseph's.
- c. Students who live within the catchment area as per Bus Eireann route (see map attached) including those attending St. Mochulla's National School.
- d. Students whose parents were past pupils.

- e. Random selection of those next closest to the school ordered in categories of 2km radius distances from their house to the school.
- f. Random selection process which treats all remaining applicants as equal. This lottery will be supervised by two observers, external to the school. In the case of siblings, the selection of one sibling will normally include the other sibling – every effort will be made not to separate siblings applying together.

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:

A random selection process which treats all applicants as equal. This lottery will be supervised by two observers, external to the school.

St. Joseph's Secondary School does not have an historical waiting list.

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;
(other than in relation to: a special class insofar as 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, 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 (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

- (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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Joseph's 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 St. Joseph's, 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 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

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. Joseph's 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.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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 data 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 St. Joseph's 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. Joseph's 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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late 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 applicant will be added to the waiting list.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

Enrolment of Students Transferring from other Second-Level Schools

Where a student wishes to transfer from another second level school, an application must be made using the correct application form to the Principal. Application forms for transfers should be submitted prior to the end of the previous school year.

The reason for the requested transfer must be clearly stated. The application should be accompanied by an academic progress report.

In deciding on applications the following sequence will be followed:

- Priority will be given to applications from students who are from outside the Tulla catchment area and are changing domicile into the Tulla catchment area and who do not have a second level educational place within the area at the time of the change of domicile.
- Priority is given to students with siblings already in the school.
- Next, consideration will be given to applications for transfer by students from other schools. Applications from students in this category will be processed for the start of a new school year.

All applications in any category above will be subject to the following criteria:

- Space in a particular year.
- That the applicant is between the ages of 12 years - 18 years and age appropriate for the year group.
- A parent/guardian confirming the acceptability of the school's code of behaviour.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application in exceptional circumstances. The right to refuse may arise if:

- (i) The school cannot meet the special needs of a student or provide that student with an appropriate education.
- (ii) In the opinion of the Board of Management the applicant possesses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.

A decision on the application will be made in accordance with this policy and will be communicated to the parent/guardian within 21 days of the receipt of the written application. Any refusal of an application may be appealed in accordance with procedures below.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, where the Principal registers a student who is already registered in another recognised school, he/she is obliged to give written notification of the transfer to the Principal of the school in which the student was previously registered and the Principal of that other school must notify the Principal of any problems relating to school attendance that the student concerned had while attending the other school and such other matters relating to the student's educational progress as he or she considers appropriate.

Students who opt to transfer out of St. Joseph's to another 2nd level school elsewhere will have no automatic right of re-entry should they change their mind and indicate a wish to return to St. Joseph's. However priority will be given to such students who are returning from outside the catchment area.

Enrolment of Students into Transition Year

Transition Year is an optional part of the curriculum in St. Joseph's. Applications are accepted up to the deadline printed on the form each year. Applications received after that date may not be considered if sufficient places are not available.

An entry process has been developed – see Transition Year Admission's Policy.

Enrolment of Students into Leaving Certificate Applied

1. Application forms are to be returned to the Programmes Co-ordinator by the closing date specified. (Late applications will only be offered a place if one is available. Otherwise, late

applicants will be placed on a waiting list). Acceptance of the completed application form does not confirm a place on the programme.

2. External applicants will be required to follow the St. Joseph's enrolment policy and may complete a leaving cert applied application if interested. They must however follow the same admission procedures as internal applicants.
3. Prior to the selection process the Programmes Co-ordinator, Third Year Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Special Needs Team, and Principal/Deputy Principal meet to identify and discuss candidates for whom the programme is appropriate and beneficial.
4. The Programmes Co-ordinator and a member of the LCA core team will conduct an interview with the candidate to ensure there is an understanding of what is involved in Leaving Certificate Applied and to establish interest in possible electives.
5. Following selection, the successful candidate will be offered a provisional place on the Leaving Cert Applied Programme and their parent/guardian will be informed by letter. Included in this will be a Leaving Cert Applied Contract, the terms of which must be signed by both student and parent/guardian confirming their acceptance of the terms of the contract and returned to the Programmes Co-ordinator by the specified date.
6. Students who return a signed Leaving Cert Applied Contract will be accepted to the St. Joseph's LCA Programme.
7. Students whose attendance record has been particularly poor over Junior Cycle, are strongly discouraged unless it is felt that this attendance record can be over-turned.

Applications for Repeat Leaving Certificate

Criteria

The school will consider requests to repeat the Leaving Certificate from students. Priority will be given to students of the school and only thereafter to students from other schools. As distinct from students enrolled in St. Joseph's, repeat applicants from other schools are considered under the requests for Transfer above.

While the school sees itself as having a commitment to our own students in relation to repeat Leaving Certificate, all applications for repeat, whether from students from within or without the school, will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- capacity of the school, in terms of numbers, to take repeat candidates
- The application must be received by the stated closing date on the application form.
- previous compliance with school behaviour code
- previous record in terms of work rate and effort in class
- previous attendance record

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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:

All applications for transfers are to be submitted prior to the end of the previous school year.

If this is not the case, the application will be considered if:

- There is space in a particular year.
- That the applicant is between the ages of 12 years - 18 years and age appropriate for the year group.
- A parent/guardian confirms the acceptability of the school's code of behaviour.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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

The board of St. Joseph's or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education Act, 1998, 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

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend St. Joseph's without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will be then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how that 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.