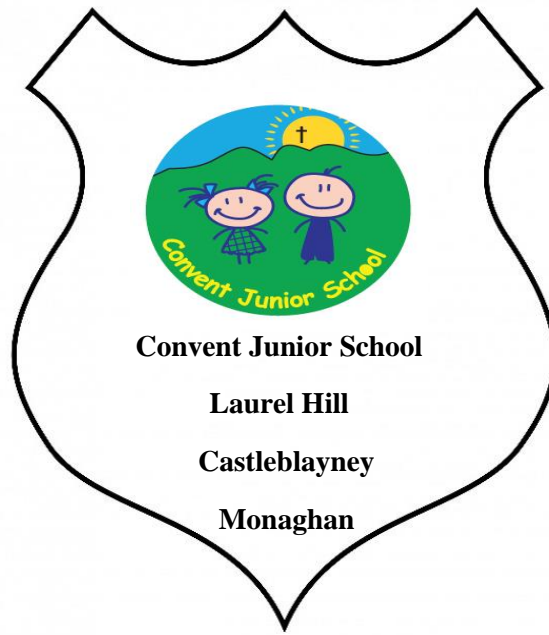


Patron: Bishop Larry Duffy



# Convent Junior School

## Admissions Policy

### 2023/2024

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## **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 in January 2024. 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 the Convent Junior School'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 the school**

The Convent Junior School is a primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Clogher. We are a school for boys and girls and classes are taught from junior Infants to First Class. Our classes for children with Mild Intellectual Disability and ASD cater for children from Junior Infants to First Class.

“Catholic Ethos” means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith, in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or

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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 the Convent Junior 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.

***Convent Junior School Mission Statement***

The aim of the Convent Junior School is to promote the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual development of the child whilst maintaining a caring, happy and secure atmosphere. We provide quality learning experiences that are engaging, enriching and enjoyable through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community. Respect for each other, the community, the wider world and our environment.

We seek to provide a welcoming place, respectful and accommodating of diversity in race, culture, religion, gender and ability. The school promotes gender equality and is an equal opportunities employer. We strive to provide an inclusive environment responsive to the needs of all including those from the Travelling community, other countries, children with additional needs and children with English as an Additional Language.

We value most highly our relationship with parents and the local community and seek to continue to work in partnership with parents to ensure the best interests of each child is provided for.

Teachers are encouraged to develop their personal and professional talents for the benefit of the pupils in whose education they play such a significant role. The work of ancillary staff is highly valued and makes a very valuable contribution to the process of education.

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### **3. Admission Statement**

The Convent 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.

The Convent Junior School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who 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) The Convent Junior School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a classes to provide an education exclusively for students with Mild

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General Intellectual Disability and ASD 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. (Please read this in conjunction with our Special Class Admissions Policy).

## 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:

1. Priority is given to brothers and sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past. If the class is oversubscribed based on this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
2. Families whose primary residence is either:
  - a. in the immediate areas our Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish or
  - b. in another Parish within a 3-kilometer distance by road from the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this criterion, then the furthest from the school under either (a) or (b) will be eliminated first.
3. Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this criterion, then those whose primary residence is furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
4. If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List, which is compiled and ordered according to the date of the original application. The criteria are listed in order of priority when spaces are allocated under criterion 1 and space is still available, then criterion 2 comes into play and so on. This prioritization proceeds until all places have been allocated.

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## **6. 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 our 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 above where we have included the selection criteria based on siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and in relation to parents having attended, we will 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.

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

## **7. Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to the Convent Junior School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- 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

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(Please see section 13 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 14](#) 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.

### **8. 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 17 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from the Convent 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.

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## **10. 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 the Convent Junior School where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false, misleading or pertinent information has not been disclosed.
- (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 9 above.

## **11. 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.

## **12. 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 the Convent 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 the Convent 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



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accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

### **13. 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.

### **14. 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 are based on the criteria aforementioned and the overall pupil teacher ratio within the school.

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

The board of the Convent 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.

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

The class teacher will provide relevant, appropriate alternative work 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. In the spirit of inclusiveness, the class teacher will draw attention and explore other denominational celebrations throughout and invite the children or parents to provide information on their customs.

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## **17. 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**

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**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.