



LORETO SECONDARY SCHOOL, ST MICHAEL'S
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Admissions Policy

This Policy was approved by the School Patron, the Loreto Education Trust on 23rd March 2026.

Table of Contents

Defined Terms	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of the School	3
2.1 School's Mission Statement	4
2.2 Our Philosophy of Education	4
3. Admission Statement	4
3.1 Non-Discrimination	5
3.2 Additional Provisions	5
4. Categories of Special Educational Needs Catered For	5
5. Admission of Students	5
5.1 Special Class (Moderate General Learning Disability) - Eligibility Criteria	6
6. Oversubscription	6
7. Selection Process	7
7.1 Random Selection Process	7
7.2 Waiting List	7
7.3 Mainstream Waiting List	7
7.4 Special Class Waiting List	7
7.5 Late Applications	8
8. What Will Not Be Considered or Taken into Account	8
9. Decisions on Applications	8
10. Notifying Applicants of Decisions	8
11. Acceptance of an Offer of a Place by an Applicant	9
12. Circumstances in Which Offers May Not Be Made or May Be Withdrawn	9
13. Sharing of Data with Other Schools	9
14. Waiting List in the Event of Oversubscription	10
15. Late Applications	10
16. Admission to Other Years and Admission During the School Year	10
17. Arrangements Regarding Students Not Attending Religious Instruction	11
18. Review of Admissions Decisions	11
18.1 Review of Decisions by the Board of Management	11
18.2 Right of Appeal	11
19. Review of the Policy	12
Appendix 1: List of Primary Schools Referenced in Section 6 (Oversubscription)	13

Defined Terms

This section provides a description of the defined terms used in this Policy. These will be capitalised throughout the document.

Education Act 1998 (as amended)	Means the Education Act 1998, including amendments made by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and any subsequent amendments.
Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (as amended)	Means the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and any amendments made to it, and includes any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof.
Equal Status Act 2000 (as amended)	Means the Equal Status Act 2000, including any amendments, statutory modifications or re-enactments thereof.
School Patron	Loreto Education Trust.
the School	Means Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's, Navan, Co. Meath.

Abbreviated Terms

BOM	Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's
DEY	Department of Education and Youth
NCSE	National Council for Special Education

1. Introduction

The School is a recognised post-primary school for girls under the Education Act 1998 (as amended), and it operates under the relevant legislation, ministerial regulations and the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Youth.

The Board of Management (BOM) of the School sets out this Policy in compliance with the requirements of the Education Act 1998 (as amended) and the Equal Status Act 2000 (as amended). This Policy also reflects the ethos and values of the School.

In drafting this Policy, the BOM has consulted with school staff, the School Patron and parents of children attending the School.

The Policy was approved by the School Patron on 13 September 2023. It is published on the School's website and will be made available in hard copy, on request, to any person who requests it.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned. The relevant dates and timelines for the 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 notice sets out the relevant dates and timelines for the admissions process.

The application form for admission is published on the School's website¹ and will be made available in hard copy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of the School

The School is a Catholic all-girls voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust.

Loreto schools seek to provide an education that affirms the innate dignity of every human being created in God's image and fosters the full and harmonious development of each student, encompassing the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects, in an environment of Justice, Freedom, Sincerity, Truth and Joy. The creation of a dynamic school community where every student is equally cherished and has a real sense of belonging is a priority in a Loreto school, which draws its inspiration from Gospel values and the rich heritage passed on to us from Mary Ward and Teresa Ball, and enshrined in our documents on Loreto Education, including 'Kolkata Educational Guidelines for Loreto Schools'², 'Continuing the Journey: A Loreto Education'³ and 'A Mary Ward Schools' Compass'⁴.

Students are encouraged to be reflective and discerning in the spirit of our Loreto and Ignatian tradition and continue to grow with integrity in right relationship with God, with other people and with the environment.

¹ <https://www.loretonavan.ie/>

² <https://loretoeducationtrust.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Loreto-Education-Kolkata-Guidelines.pdf>

³ <https://loretoeducationtrust.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Continuing-the-Journey.pdf>

⁴ <https://loretoeducationtrust.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Mary-Ward-Compass.pdf>

Our philosophy of holistic education places the person of the student at the centre of the educational enterprise, which nurtures the student's capacity to "seek truth...to love what is good...to strive for excellence" (Teresa Ball) and joyfully engage with lifelong, self-directed learning in all its dimensions. In doing so, we are committed to preparing students to take their place in society as generous, confident, perceptive, well-informed, articulate and compassionate people ready to contribute to the common good.

Loreto schools welcome students of all faiths and of none while maintaining a Catholic ethos. Interfaith and intercultural dialogue, together with a spirit of inclusivity and the celebration of diversity are fostered in the School.

In harmony with our characteristic spirit and recognising that care of faith and education are fundamental to the Loreto tradition, Religious Education is central to our curriculum and the faith formation of Catholic students is supported by the School in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church. Each student's spiritual life is expressed and deepened through prayer, ritual in the cycle of the liturgical year, reflection on the profound link between faith and justice, and creative engagement with the dialogue of faith and life communicated in nature, in science and in the arts.

In accordance with section 15(2)(b) of the Education Act 1998 (as amended), the BOM of the School shall uphold, and be accountable to the School 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.

2.1 School's Mission Statement

Here in St Michael's, we provide a happy and secure, student-centred place of learning. Inclusivity, respect, kindness and encouragement are central to everything we do.

2.2 Our Philosophy of Education

As a Catholic school, we endeavour to be an educational community where:

- the Loreto Values of Justice, Freedom, Truth, Sincerity and Joy are lived;
- we are all accepted;
- we all belong;
- shared leadership comes with shared responsibility;
- critical thinking, Restorative Practice, and digital and social-awareness are fundamental;
- being responsive to, and reflective of, a modern world is important;
- we are respectful of our traditions;
- global citizenship, interconnectedness and creativity are celebrated; and
- staff, students, parents, past pupils and management co-operate for the common good.

Our practice and philosophy as a faith school is captured in our 'Kolkata Educational Guidelines for Loreto Schools', 'Continuing the Journey: A Loreto Education' and 'A Mary Ward Schools' Compass'.

3. Admission Statement

The School's admission arrangements are set out below and are applied in accordance with the relevant legislation and the principles of non-discrimination.

3.1 Non-Discrimination

The School will not discriminate in its admission of a student on any of the following grounds:

- gender;
- civil status;
- family status;
- sexual orientation;
- religion;
- disability;
- race;
- membership of the Traveller community; or
- special educational needs.

These grounds have been construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000 (as amended).

3.2 Additional Provisions

As the School is an all-girls school, it does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission.

The School does not discriminate if it refuses to admit a student into the special class where the student does not have the specified category of special educational needs concerned, or where the needs are deemed such that the School cannot meet the needs of the student. (see section 4 and 5.1 of the Policy)

The School's objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values. The school is a Catholic school and does not discriminate in relation to admission of students where it refuses to admit, as a student, a person who is not of this denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The School will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including, in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

The School will comply with any direction served on the BOM or the School Patron under the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs Catered For

The School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, has established a special class to provide an education exclusively for students with a Moderate General Learning Disability.

5. Admission of Students

The School shall admit each student seeking admission except where:

- The School is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details).
- The student will not turn 12 years of age before 1 January during her first academic year in the School, in accordance with Department of Education and Youth regulations.
- A parent of a student, when required by the Principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (as amended), fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour 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.
- The application is made on behalf of a boy, as the School provides education exclusively for girls.
- The application is made on behalf of a girl for a place in the special class for students diagnosed with a Moderate General Learning Disability and the applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria set out in section 5.1 of the Policy.

5.1 Special Class (Moderate General Learning Disability) - Eligibility Criteria

The BOM has updated the eligibility criteria in accordance with NCSE guidelines.

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for Moderate General Learning Disability where the following is provided in support of the application:

- Professional report(s) confirming:
 - A diagnosis of special educational needs, including Moderate General Learning Disability;
 - Evidence demonstrating the complexity of the child's overall level of need(s);
 - A clear professional recommendation, based on the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, setting out the most appropriate educational placement and the rationale for same;
 - A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for Moderate General Learning Disability.

6. Oversubscription

Where the School is oversubscribed, places will be allocated in accordance with the order of priority set out below. The selection criteria apply to applications received within the timeline specified in the School's annual admission notice.

1. Girls assessed as having a Moderate General Learning Disability and for whom the psychological report (carried out no earlier than twelve months prior to the application) recommends their placement in a special class. Priority given in this category is subject to the overall limit of eight students in the special class. In the event of demand for places in the special class exceeding the number of available places, offers will be made on the basis of the criteria below. Please note also that applicants under this category will also be asked if they wish to be considered for a mainstream place in the event of not securing a place in the special class.
2. Sisters of present pupils; sisters of eligible past pupils of the School, being past pupils who have completed fifth and sixth year; and daughters of present eligible staff members of the School, being staff members who have been employed by the School for a minimum of one academic year and who

are reasonably expected to be employed by the School at the time their daughter commences in the School.

3. Girls currently enrolled in sixth class in St Anne's, Loreto Primary School, Navan.
4. Girls currently enrolled in sixth class in primary schools listed in Appendix 1.
5. Girls in sixth class (or equivalent) residing in the Navan catchment area with a Navan address, provided that proof of address is submitted with the application.
6. All other applicants.

7. Selection Process

Where the number of applicants within any selection criteria category exceeds the number of places available, and two or more applicants are tied for a place, places within that category will be allocated by means of a random selection process.

7.1 Random Selection Process

This process will be overseen by the Principal and will be witnessed by a representative of the Parents' Association and a neutral observer from the wider community of Navan such as a member of An Garda Síochána.

The application forms for each applicant in the relevant category with entitlement for inclusion in the random selection process will be placed in a container. The application forms will be drawn from the container one by one until it is empty. The order in which the forms are drawn will be written on each form when it is taken from the container.

Where two or more sisters apply for a place in first year, if one sibling is drawn during the random selection process, her sister(s) will automatically be granted a place. In such circumstances, any additional place created will be in addition to the basic allocation of places.

Round 1 places will be provisionally offered in the order in which forms are drawn until all available places are filled.

7.2 Waiting List

Those who are not allocated a place will be placed on a numbered waiting list in the order in which they were drawn in the random selection.

7.3 Mainstream Waiting List

Parents shall be informed of their daughter's place on the waiting list and subsequent offers of places will be made in accordance with the order recorded in the original waiting list.

7.4 Special Class Waiting List

A waiting list of students who are eligible for a place in the special class will be established in accordance with the procedures set out in section 7.1 and 7.2 of the Policy. The waiting list will remain in operation for the duration of the enrolment period. Students who accept a place in the mainstream setting may remain on the special class waiting list for so long as they continue to meet the eligibility criteria for the special class. Any vacancies arising in the special class will, in the first instance, be offered to students on this waiting list.

7.5 Late Applications

Late applicants will be placed on the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis.

8. What Will Not Be Considered or Taken into Account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act 1998 (as amended), 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:

- The payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the School.
- A student's academic ability, skills or aptitude, other than where the application is for admission to the special class.
- The occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents.
- A requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission.
- 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 where a selection criterion relating to siblings is included.
- The date and time on which an application for admission was received by the School, provided that the application is received during the period specified in the School's annual admission notice for the school year concerned.
- Third party canvassing on behalf of an applicant is outside the terms and spirit of the Policy and such intervention will not be considered in the allocation of a school place.

9. Decisions on Applications

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

- The 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 the School's annual admission notice for receiving applications.

Please see section 15 in relation to applications received outside the admissions period and section 16 in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.

Selection criteria that are not included in the Policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for admission to the School.

10. Notifying Applicants of Decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision of the School within the timeline set out in the annual admission notice.

If a student is not offered a place in the School, the reasons for that decision will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will also be informed of the right to seek a review or appeal of the School's decision (see section 18 below for further details).

11. Acceptance of an Offer of a Place by an Applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from the School, the applicant must indicate:

- (i) whether or not the applicant has accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. Where such an offer has been accepted, details of the offer or offers concerned must be provided; and
- (ii) whether or not the applicant has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools and, if so, details of the other school or schools concerned must be provided.

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.

12. 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 School, where:

- It is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- An applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the School's annual admission notice.
- The parent of a student, when required by the Principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (as amended), 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.
- An applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 11 above.

13. Sharing of Data with Other Schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education Act 1998 (as amended) 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 school 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).

14. Waiting List in the Event of Oversubscription

In the event that there are more applications for the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list will be compiled of students whose applications for admission to the School were unsuccessful due to the School being oversubscribed. The waiting list will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list will be determined by the order of priority assigned to applications after the School has applied the selection criteria in accordance with the Policy.

Any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in respect of which admission is sought will be offered to students on the waiting list in accordance with the order of priority by which they have been placed on the list.

15. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date set out in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with the Policy, the Education Act 1998 (as amended) 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 where one is available. Where no place is available, the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list.

16. Admission to Other Years and Admission During the School Year

The procedures of the School in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the School, whether applying for years other than first year or applying after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

- Where parents wish to apply for their daughter to enrol in a year group other than first year, or to transfer during the school year, they should in the first instance submit the appropriate application form, available on the School website or from the School office.
- Applications will only be considered where a vacancy exists in the relevant year group, as determined by the BOM and subject to subject groupings.
- Before accepting an offer of a place in the School, the parents and their daughter are strongly advised to attend a meeting with the Principal or Deputy Principal to ensure that a transfer to the School would be in the best interests of the student. Parents should give consideration to curricular provision, subject choices and levels and facilities available at the time. Curriculum provision will be constrained by the number of places available in individual subject classes, including the availability of different levels of study within each subject.

- In the event that there is more than one application for a particular place, the place will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis, provided that the application procedures outlined above have been complied with.
- An offer of a place may be withdrawn in accordance with section 12 above.

17. Arrangements Regarding Students Not Attending Religious Instruction

Religious Education is provided in the School in a manner that supports the participation of all students, whether of a particular religious affiliation or of none.

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend the School without attending religious instruction should make a written request for a meeting with the Principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as appropriate, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the School. Such arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day for the student concerned.

18. Review of Admissions Decisions

Applicants may seek a review of an admissions decision or appeal such a decision in accordance with the procedures set out below.

18.1 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 BOM to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with section 29C of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

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 (as amended), which are published on the DEY website.

The BOM will conduct such reviews in accordance with the procedures determined under section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the School being oversubscribed, the applicant must request a review of that decision by the BOM prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

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 BOM prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

18.2 Right of Appeal

Under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended), 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 the School to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under section 29(1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 (as amended) 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 (as amended) where the refusal to admit was due to 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 BOM prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended). (see 18.1 above)

Where an applicant has been refused admission for a reason other than the School being oversubscribed, the applicant may request a review of that decision by the BOM prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended). (see 18.1 above)

Appeals under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended) will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Youth.

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 (as amended), which are published on the DEY website.

19. Review of the Policy

The Policy is reviewed periodically by the Board of Management and amendments may be adopted following approval by the School Patron, the Loreto Education Trust.

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal / Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____

The Policy was approved by the School Patron, the Loreto Education Trust on the 23rd March 2026.

Appendix 1: List of Primary Schools Referenced in Section 6 (Oversubscription)

School Name	School Address
Aine Naofa NS	Fairgreen Navan, Co. Meath C15E208
Ard Rí CNS	Balreask, Old Navan, Co. Meath C15D340
Bohermeen NS	Bohermeen, Navan, Co. Meath C15XF70
Castletown NS	Castletown, Kilpatrick, Navan Co. Meath C15K225
Flowerfield NS	Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath C15XV20
Gaelscoil Éanna	Trim Road, Limekilnhill, Navan, Co. Meath C15WF67
Kentstown NS	Kentstown, Navan, Co. Meath C15YK73
Kilmessan NS	Kilmessan, Co. Meath C15TE28
Navan Educate Together NS	Common's Rd., Navan, Co. Meath C15YY3D
Scoil Bhríde	Cannistown, Navan, Co. Meath C15CX61
Scoil Cholmcille	Skryne, Tara, Co. Meath C15NV99
Scoil Mhuire Navan	Abbey Rd, Navan, Co. Meath C15DA09
Scoil Mhuire Robinstown NS	Robinstown, Navan, Co. Meath C15YK66
Scoil Mhuire Naofa Rathfeigh	Rathfeigh, Tara, Co. Meath C15F220
Scoil Naomh Barra	Wilkinstown, Navan, Co. Meath C15VW32
Scoil Naomh Eoin	Clonmagadden Valley, Windtown, Navan, Co. Meath C15HK75
Scoil Naomh Padraig	Collon Rd, Slane, Co. Meath C15NX78
Scoil Naomh Pio	Knockcommon, Beauparc, Co. Meath C15X959
Scoil Na Tríonóide Naofa	Lismullen, Garlow Cross, Navan, Co. Meath C15NH68
Scoil Ultain Naofa	Baile Ghib, An Uaimh, Co. Na Mí, C15PD95
St. Joseph's Mercy PS	Railway St., Navan, Co. Meath C15EA40
St. Joseph's NS Boyerstown	Boyerstown, Navan, Co. Meath C15WT26
St. Joseph's NS Dunderry	Dunderry, Navan, Co. Meath C15HH63
St. Louis NS Rathkenny	Rathkenny, Navan, Co. Meath C15PH60
St. Mary's Special School	Johnstown, Navan, Co. Meath C15H735

St. Oliver Plunkett NS	Blackcastle, Navan, Co. Meath C15R642
St. Paul's NS	Abbeylands, Navan, Co. Meath C15V067
St. Peter & Paul's NS	Drumconrath, Navan, Co. Meath C15TX05
St. Stephen's NS	Johnstown, Navan, Co. Meath C15AE03
St. Ultan's Special School	Flowerhill, Navan, Co. Meath C15HX60
Stackallen NS	Stackallen, Navan, Co. Meath C15Y104
Yellow Furze NS	Seneschalstown, Beauparc, Co. Meath C15X535