

# **Admission Policy of St. Louise de Marillac Primary School**

**School Address: Drumfinn Road, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10.**

**Roll number: 20397S**

**School Patron/s: 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. 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 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St. Louise de Marillac'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. Reference may also be made to our Religious Education and GDPR policies.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

## **2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School is a Catholic all girls primary school with infant boys, with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop 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 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,

and which school provides religious education for the pupils 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) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Louise de Marillac Primary 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 & Vision Statement**

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School is a Catholic School. The school has a commitment to diversity and inclusivity while, at the same time, protecting the integrity of the Catholic ethos of the school. St. Louise de Marillac Primary School is conducted in accordance with the values and philosophy of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. We welcome and respect all our children and commit ourselves to value the uniqueness of each child in a happy and safe learning environment. We promote social and cultural awareness and academic success in a happy and safe learning environment. We encourage an interest in learning and hope to lay foundations for a life-long love of learning.

In partnership with the family, we encourage each child to grow in confidence and self-esteem. We seek the development of his/her full potential. We hope that we will be guided, supported and encouraged by the experiences and interactions we have with the children in our care and their families. We hope to respond to the needs of all the children in a way that enables us to share an enjoyable journey of learning together. Positive links with the local community and with other outside / support agencies will be maintained, so that the educational experiences of the children in our school will be enhanced.

### **3. Admission Statement**

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with

special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

#### **Additional Information**

##### **Single gender schools**

St. Louise de Marillac is an all-girls school with infant boys, which caters for girls from Junior Infants to 6th class and for boys from Junior Infants to 1st class.

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

##### **In the case of a mainstream school with a SEN class attached**

St. Louise de Marillac with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

#### **5. Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed
- 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

#### **Additional information**

##### **A school that admits students of one gender only**

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School provides education for girls from junior infants to sixth class and for boys from junior infants to first class only. All boys must transfer to an alternative school upon completion of first class. St. Louise de Marillac may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

St. Louise de Marillac is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school. St. Louise de Marillac Primary School has a commitment to diversity and inclusivity while, at the same time, protecting the integrity of the Catholic ethos of the school.

##### **School with special education class(es)**

The special class attached to St. Louise de Marillac Primary School provides an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) 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:

### Selection Criteria

Priority will be given to:

1. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and children resident in the parish of Ballyfermot Upper (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
2. Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
3. Children residing outside the parish (the eldest child will also have priority)
4. Those who have attended Early Start in St. Louise de Marillac.
5. Children of past pupils.
6. Girls over boys as boys may only attend the school for a maximum of 3 years.

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:

Places will be offered on a priority basis to applicants whose home (*i.e.* the principal, primary residence) is located within the shortest distance to a defined point in St. Louise de Marillac School (*i.e.* the front door to the reception area).

The measurement will be calculated on an OS map available in the school, using a straight line measurement from the home of the applicant to the defined point.

Applicants who are unsuccessful in attaining a place will be placed on a waiting list, ranked in priority according to the above selection criteria.

## 7. Application Procedure for Special Classes for Children with Autism

Parents who wish to enrol their child are required to complete an Expression of Interest form.

- 'Expression of interest' forms are available on the school website and from the school office.
- Valid Expression of Interest forms for admissions in the next school year will be accepted following the publication of the Annual Admissions Notice.
- All applications received on or prior to the deadline outlined in the Admissions Notice will be reviewed by the school admissions team, in accordance with the enrolment and selection criteria specified in this policy.
  - The date of receipt of application is not given any additional weighting.
  - Upon receipt of completed 'expression of interest' forms and the requested documentation, the school will send an acknowledgment letter via post to the parents/guardians to confirm that the form has been received and whether or not it is considered valid.
- Any form not accompanied by confirmation of an ASD diagnosis and recommendation for a special class will not be considered valid until which time as the school receives a copy of the required documentation. Accordingly, it is important to note that all documentation must be

furnished to the school by the deadline outlined in the Admissions Notice, preceding the school year that is being applied for.

- No guarantee of a place is given or implied by the recording of a child's details on the expression of interest form.

Requested Documentation:

1. A report containing the following information
  - a. The child has a confirmed diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The report must detail the classification of ASD by a psychiatrist or clinical/educational psychologist using DSM-IV, DSM-V or ICD-10 criteria or multidisciplinary assessment of same by a professional team, (including a clinical psychologist/ educational psychologist).
  - b. A recommendation for ASD specific education in a special class made by a clinical / educational psychologist.
  - c. This report must be from a recent multi-disciplinary assessment, which was completed within the last 2 years of the proposed enrolment date. Where it has not been possible to get an updated psychological report, the school admissions team will accept a letter from the original psychologist / service who wrote the student's most current report. This letter must confirm the student's diagnosis of autism 5 and intellectual disability, and that the report's depiction of the student and recommendation for a special class is still current and accurate.
2. An expression of interest form, which must be filled out completely within the allotted timeframe in order to be deemed valid. Applications received outside of the admissions period (i.e. the deadline outlined in the Admissions Notice) will not be taken into consideration.

### **Allocation of Places**

A team is formed each year to consider expressions of interest, (comprising the principal, deputy principal/ SEN Co., HSCL and at least one teacher). The team recognises that taking the decision to admit new entrants into the ASD class must be made with the understanding of resources available within the school community to meet the unique needs of each newly enrolled child. It must also continue meeting the needs and abilities of the children already enrolled in the school.

### **Oversubscription in Special Classes for Children with Autism**

The maximum ASD class size is six pupils. St. Louise de Marillac's ASD class caters for girls from junior infant to 2nd class and boys from junior infants to the end of first class. The boys enrolled in the special class will be placed in another school at the end of 1st class.

Prior to the establishment of the special class in January 2022, any child currently enrolled in a mainstream class in St. Louise's with a diagnosis of ASD and a recommendation for placement in a special class will be given priority placement in the ASD unit, should it suit their needs.

If the number of eligible children exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order:

- a. The needs of the current school children are still met, and the school is in a position to offer the appropriate resources to the newly admitted students.
- b. The placement is age appropriate.
- c. Girls over boys as boys may only attend the school for a maximum of 3 years.
- d. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school.
- e. Children resident in the parish of Ballyfermot Upper.
- f. Children of staff.
- g. Children living outside the catchment area.

### **Waiting list in the event of over subscription**

A waiting list, of students whose applications for admission to the ASD class were unsuccessful will be compiled, and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought. Should a vacancy arise during the school year, all applicants on the waiting list

will be given equal consideration under the selection criteria at that time. This waiting list will end on the last school day in June of that academic year and the school will commence accepting applications for admission in line with their annual admissions notice.

## 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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
  - (I) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;
- (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. Louise de Marillac Primary 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 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. Louise de Marillac Primary School, you must indicate—

(i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

## **11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn**

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by St. Louise de Marillac Primary School where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.
- (v) 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 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 St. Louise de Marillac Primary School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Louise de Marillac Primary 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 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 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 no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

### **15. 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 as follows:

1. The parent must complete an enrolment form.
2. If the school is not oversubscribed and there is room in the intended class group, the student may be enrolled.



3. When placing the new student in a class consideration will be given to the number of pupils already in that class. Generally new pupils are assigned to the smallest class in a year group; however, exceptions may occur based on the level of need already existing in any given class in a given year.

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:

1. The parent must complete an enrolment form.
2. If the school is not oversubscribed and there is room in the intended class group the student may be enrolled.
3. Students will be encouraged to commence in the school following a standardised break if possible e.g. after Halloween as it helps ease the student into the new school environment.
4. When placing the new student in a class consideration will be given to the number of pupils already in that class. Generally new pupils are assigned to the smallest class in a year group; however exceptions may occur based on the level of need already existing in any given class in a given year.

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

The board of St. Louise de Marillac Primary 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.

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

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents have 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:

- The student will remain in their classroom while religious instruction takes place.
- The student will engage in an age appropriate, alternative and independent activity such as reading, project work etc. while the religious instruction takes place.
- The school celebrates religious feasts throughout the year. Ceremonies take place in the school hall. Children, not attending religious instruction, may be present at these ceremonies but do not participate. If supervision is available, these pupils may be supervised in an alternative location in a non-instructional capacity.
- When sacramental preparation takes place it involves visits to St. Matthew's Church. The children, who are not preparing to receive the sacraments, may stay behind in a different classroom in the school, which will include teacher/SNA supervision.
- A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) to discuss how the 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.

*Dr Gerry Berry*

*Alma Quinn*

Dr. Gerry Berry

Chairperson

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Alma Quinn

Principal