



Loreto College Junior School

Admissions Policy

1. Introduction

Loreto College Junior School (LCJS) is a Catholic ethos all girls private Junior School under the patronage and trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust.

The educational philosophy of the School is centred in God, rooted in Gospel values and derives its objectives and specific expression from the insights and vision of St. Ignatius of Loyola and Mary Ward. LCJS offers a Catholic education which strives to empower and motivate students to develop and use their individual gifts with confidence, creativity and generosity, in a spirit of loving and responsible service. The School has an eight-year cycle from Junior Infants to 6TH Class. Teaching follows the Primary School Curriculum. However, LCJS is not a National School and is not under the auspices of the Department of Education nor is it subject to the Rules for National Schools.

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018. In drafting this policy, the Board of Management of the school has consulted with school staff and the school patron.

The policy was approved by the Board of Management on 15th March 2021. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

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

2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of LCJS

Loreto College Junior School is part of a worldwide network of Loreto schools. Within the general Loreto Philosophy of Education and evolving from that philosophy, our Junior School is characterised by the following:

- *It is a friendly, welcoming place where staff, children and parents experience a sense of warmth, friendship and belonging and where we emphasise the dignity and equality of all people.*
- *In collaboration with parents, the school aims for the pursuit of excellence appropriate to each student through a holistic education based on Gospel values.*
- *A broad curriculum is offered to enable students to reach their full potential both academically and creatively and to develop a love of learning.*
- *We strive to enable students to develop powers of critical reflection thereby building independence of mind as a means towards responsible citizenship.*

3. Ethos of Loreto Schools

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. This draws its inspiration from Gospel values and the rich heritage passed on to us from Mary Ward and Teresa Ball ¹, and is enshrined in our documents on Loreto Education, including *Kolkata Educational Guidelines for Loreto Schools*, *Continuing the Journey: A Loreto Education* and *A Mary Ward School's Compass*.

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

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 to joyfully engage with life-long self-directed learning in all its dimensions.

In so doing, Loreto schools 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, whilst maintaining a Catholic ethos. Inter-faith and inter-cultural 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.

'Catholic Ethos' in the context of a Catholic 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,

¹ The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary was founded in 1609 by Mary Ward and Teresa Ball brought this tradition, which she named Loreto, to Ireland in 1821.

and where the 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 Loreto College 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.

4. Admission Statement

Loreto College Junior School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds:

- (a) LCJS is an all-girls school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school.
- (b) the civil status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned is a member of the Traveller community
- (i) 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, The grounds of 'civil status', 'disability', 'family status', 'gender', 'race', 'religion', 'sexual orientation', 'Traveller community' and 'discrimination' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

5. Admission of Students

Loreto College Junior School is a private fee charging all girls junior school. The 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

- c) an application is received in respect of a boy
- d) exceptional circumstances

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment of a pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

- the pupil has special needs such that, even with the supports currently available in the school, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education;
- in the opinion of the Principal, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk, to other pupils, to school staff or to school property

Terms and Condition of Admission

1. The acceptance and enrolment of pupils in the School is based on a private contract between LCJS and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each pupil.
2. Parents or Guardians must be prepared to respect the Catholic ethos of the School and agree to have their children educated in accordance with this ethos and with the School's Religious Education Policy.
3. The Principal of the School will be responsible for implementing the Admission Policy.
4. Loreto College Junior School may, from time to time, vary the numbers of pupils in each class. Should it be decided to reduce the number of pupils, the number of places available for new pupils may be reduced accordingly.

6. Allocation of Places

The school will apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below:

- a. Available places in the school will first be offered to children who have sisters attending either Loreto College Junior School or Loreto College Senior School.
- b. Children of staff members of either school.
- c. Daughters or granddaughters of past pupils of the school subject to a 25% cap.
- d. If there are any remaining places, these will be offered to applicants in the order in which such applications are received.
- e. The Board of Management reserves the right to give priority to children over and above criteria (a), (b), (c), (d) where, in the opinion of the Board, such priority is justified. This priority can be based on compassionate grounds or exceptional circumstances.

Waiting Lists will be determined in accordance with the criteria for enrolment. Applications are accepted throughout the year.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

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 academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (b) academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents

8. Decisions on Applications

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

- our school's admission policy;
- the information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form together with any relevant reports.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

- Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the Principal.
- Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the Principal's decision (see section 15 below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

- An offer must be accepted in writing within 10 working days of the date of receipt of the offer.
- An acceptance must be accompanied by the requisite deposit to secure the place.

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 Loreto College Junior 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 by the school in its letter of offer;

- iii. the parent of a student, when required by the principal fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- iv. an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

12. 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 will be compiled.
- Placement on the waiting list of Loreto College 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 accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

13. 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 other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in the school in a class other than Junior Infants for the following school year may also complete an application form which is available on the school website. Applications to other classes are accepted throughout the year.
- Places will be offered to parents when the availability of places in those classes has been determined. Where the number of children seeking enrolment in any given year or class exceeds the number of places available, the same criteria that are used for the enrolment of Junior Infants will be used to prioritise children for enrolment in such classes.
- Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in the school in any class from Junior Infants to 6th Class during the course of the school year may complete an application form. The same criteria that are used for the enrolment of Junior Infants will be used to prioritise children for enrolment in such classes.

14. Arrangements regarding Students not attending Religious Instruction

The following are Loreto College Junior school's arrangements for students, where the parents have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school:

- 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 LCJS.
- These arrangements will not result in a reduction of the school day for such students nor will the student be withdrawn from the class during timetabled religious instruction.

15. Reviews/appeals

The parent of a student may request the Board of Management to review the decision of the Principal to refuse admission of the student to the school. Such a request must be made in writing within 14 days of the date on which the decision to refuse admission was communicated by the principal. The decision of the Board of Management in such a review is final.

This document will be subject to on-going review, as appropriate.

Ann Donnelly

Chairperson, LCJS BOM

Date: 15/03/2021

Tracy Hogan

Principal, LCJS

Date: 15/03/2021