



Admissions Policy

Dominican College Sion Hill

Cross Avenue

Blackrock

Co Dublin

60070k

Le Chéile Schools Trust

September 2020

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 **10 September 2020** 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 Dominican College Sion Hill'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

Dominican College Sion Hill is a Catholic all girls voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of Le Chéile Schools Trust.

The purpose of our school is to provide an education that acknowledges and affirms the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God. It embraces the intellectual, physical, cultural, emotional, social, moral and spiritual growth of each student.

Our school seeks to build a learning community that welcomes, and witnesses, the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the Le Chéile Charter. The school draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past and the charism of the founder St Dominic of the Dominican order who began this school.

Our school is committed to creating a place of inclusivity, equality and openness, where people can live with and be taught by one another, however diverse our experiences might be. It does not discriminate on religious grounds and is open to students from diverse backgrounds. It offers educational opportunities which promote excellence so that students can respond responsibly to their own lives, the lives of others and the earth, which is our home.

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is central to our curriculum. Alongside Religious Education the school supports students in their Catholic religious formation.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Dominican College Sion Hill 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

The general objectives of all Le Chéile schools include:-

- **Welcome** recognises the unique dignity and worth of each person.
- **Wisdom** is the pursuit of a greater understanding and appreciation of the world.
- **Witness** comes from the expression of Gospel values, in everyday life, and recognises that every person is made in the image and likeness of God.

Our Mission Statement

Dominican College Sion Hill aims to help each student to achieve their full potential, academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially, in a happy, secure environment.

3. Admission Statement

Dominican College Sion Hill 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.

Dominican College Sion Hill is an all-girls school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school.

Dominican College Sion Hill is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of Catholic religion in preference to others.

Dominican College Sion Hill 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

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

There are currently no special classes in Dominican College Sion Hill. Dominican College Sion Hill welcomes applications from parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with special educational needs.

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.
- c) Dominican College Sion Hill provides education exclusively for girls and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.
- d) Dominican College Sion Hill 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

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:

6.1 Applications received and places granted before 1st February 2020 in the following order

- A) Sisters of current pupils. For this purpose, "current pupils" includes girls who have been offered, and have accepted and not declined, a place in First Year but who have not yet started First Year in the School.
- B) Girls whose father or mother is a member of the Staff in the School.
- C) Daughters of past pupils of the School. This is limited to 25% of overall intake.
- D) Girls who are pupils of the following schools on 1st September in the year in which the place is being offered. Places are offered to applicants from schools in the order in which they appear on the following list:

1. Our Lady of Mercy, Booterstown
2. Carysfort National School, Blackrock
3. Guardian Angels, Newtownpark Avenue
4. Scoil Caoimhín Naofa, Oatlands, Mount Merrion
5. Scoil San Treasa, Mount Merrion
6. St Patrick's GNS, Hollypark
7. Scoil Mhuire, Lakelands
8. Dominican Convent, Dún Laoghaire

9. Monkstown Educate Together
10. St Matthew's, Irishtown
11. The Harold School, Glasthule
12. St Christopher's, Haddington Road
13. St Brigid's, Foxrock
14. St Patrick's, Ringsend
15. Our Lady of Good Counsel, Killiney
16. St Anne's, Shankill.
17. St Joseph's School Tivoli Road Dun Laoghaire

It is the responsibility of Parents/Guardians to inform the school in the Application Form that their daughter falls into one of the above categories and, in the case of Category C, to specify the years of attendance of the Parent/Guardian at the School. Failure to comply with this responsibility will result in the exclusion of the candidate from a Priority Category.

- All other applicants on the waiting list chosen strictly by date of receipt of application
- Selection by lottery after priority categories are exhausted from the 3 week application window in the October preceding entry to secondary school

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:

Selection will take place by lottery. The board will nominate an independent observer.

6.2 Applications received after 1st February 2020 in the following order

- E) Sisters of current pupils. For this purpose, "current pupils" includes girls who have been offered, and have accepted and not declined, a place in First Year but who have not yet started First Year in the School.
- F) Girls whose father or mother is a member of the Staff in the School.
- G) Daughters of past pupils of the School. This is limited to 25% of overall intake.
- H) Girls who are pupils of the following schools on 1st September in the year in which the place is being offered. Places are offered to applicants from schools in the order in which they appear on the following list:
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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:

Selection will take place by lottery. The board will nominate an independent observer.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí
- b) the payment of fees 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 her family attending or having previously attended the school, other than:
 1. siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or
 2. parents of a student having attended the school to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

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 (up until 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Dominican College Sion Hill 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

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 by email as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

It is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the school in writing of any changes in the details contained on the Preliminary Application Form. All correspondence will issue to the postal address/email address/phone number appearing on the application form or the details most recently notified in writing to the school. Failure to update changes in details may result, by consequence, in the candidate unintentionally withdrawing from the application process.

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.

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Dominican college Sion Hill, 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.

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

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

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Dominican College Sion Hill where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of ‘acceptance of an offer’ as set out in section 10 above.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;

(iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

13.Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Dominican College Sion Hill 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 Dominican College Sion Hill is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

14.Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

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

Where parents wish to make an application for their daughter to a year group other than First Year or during the school year, they should in the first instance fill in an Application Form. An offer of a place can only be made if there is space in the year group in question.

Please note that students will not be accepted into 5th year unless they have completed Transition Year at their previous school.

A decision on whether a place can be offered will be conveyed to the parents within 21 days of the initial application.

Before accepting the offer of a place in the school the parents and their daughter are strongly advised to attend a meeting with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal to ascertain whether there is a place available in the particular subject classes required by their daughter. The fact that there may be a space in a year group would not automatically mean that there is a place available in a particular subject class at the level required by the student. This is because class size is limited in certain subjects. For this reason parents and

their daughter are strongly recommended to attend a meeting with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal to ensure that a transfer to the school would be in the best interests of their daughter given the curricular provision, subject choices/levels and facilities available at the time.

Sharing of Data with other schools:

Applicants should note that the provisions of [Section 12](#) above relating to the sharing of data with other schools will apply in all cases where an application is made to a year group other than First Year or during the school year.

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or

- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;

- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant to a year group other than First Year or during the school year:

The parents must confirm their acceptance in writing of an offer of a place within two weeks of the date of the offer of a place.

In accepting an offer of admission from Dominican College Sion Hill, the parents must indicate—

- (i) whether or not they have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If they have accepted such an offer, they must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- (ii) whether or not they have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, they must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

Parents 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.

Circumstances in which offers of a place in a year group other than First Year or during the school year may not be made or may be withdrawn:

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Dominican College Sion Hill 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 within two weeks of the date of the offer of a place;
- (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 her and that she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student;
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out above;
- (v) the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education. The Board of Management 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;

Oversubscription to the year group other than First Year:

In the event of there being more applications to the year group other than First Year than places available, a waiting list of students, whose application for admission to the particular year group has been refused, will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought. The date of receipt of a properly completed Application Form will determine the position on this waiting list.

Offers of any subsequent places in the year group other than First Year that become available during the school year 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.

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

The board of Dominican College Sion Hill or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, charge fees as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Dominican College Sion Hill without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will be then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request might be accommodated by the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students.

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.