



# Loreto Secondary School

Granges Road, Kilkenny

Roll Number: 61580P

Patron: Loreto Education Trust

## ADMISSION POLICY– 2020/2021

*This policy is reviewed periodically by the Board of Management and is subject to change. Please see the appendices to this policy which are an essential component also.*

### 1. Introduction

Loreto Secondary School, Granges Road, Kilkenny is a recognised post-primary school for girls under the Education Act (1998) and it operates under the relevant legislation, ministerial regulations and the Inspectorate of the Department of Education & Skills (D.E.S.). The Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School sets out this admission policy in compliance with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. The policy also reflects the ethos and values of the school.

In drafting this policy, the Board of Management has consulted with parents of children attending the school, school staff, the Loreto Education Trust (Patron).

The Board of Management trusts that by setting out this policy, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The policy was approved by the school patron (Loreto Education Trust) on 17 September 2020.

This policy is published on the school website ([www.loreto.kk.ie](http://www.loreto.kk.ie)) and will be provided in hard copy to anyone who requires it. It must be read in conjunction with the **annual admission notice** for the school year concerned. It will be published annually on the school website at least one week before the commencement of the admissions process for the year concerned. This notice sets out the relevant dates and timelines for the admission process.

The Board of Management will notify the general public of the availability of this policy by submitting a notice for publication in: (1) parish newsletters within the catchment area (see section 3.2), (2) the local newspaper and (3) the school website ([www.loretokk.ie](http://www.loretokk.ie)). Primary schools within the catchment area shall be advised of the availability of the policy and application forms on the school website.

The application form for admission in the relevant year is published on the school website, posted to those who have registered their details on our mailing list (see website enrolment section) or is available in hard copy by request.

In this policy 'parent' will be taken to mean 'parent or guardian'.

## **2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of Loreto Secondary School**

Loreto Secondary School is a Catholic all girls' voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of 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. Each Loreto school 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*, *Continuing the Journey: A Loreto Education* and *A Mary Ward School Compass*.

Students are encouraged to be reflective and discerning in the spirit of our Loreto and Ignation tradition and to continue to grow with integrity in right relationship with God, with other people and 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 joyfully engage with life-long self-directed learning in all its dimensions. In so doing, 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. 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.

In accordance with Section 15 (2)(b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of Loreto Secondary 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.

**Loreto Secondary School  
Granges Road, Kilkenny**

**Mission Statement**

*As a Catholic school in the Loreto tradition, we aim to create a warm and caring community. In an atmosphere of respect and fairness, through support and friendship, we affirm each person's self-worth and dignity.*

*We aim to provide a student-centred education that nurtures the talents and potential of all*

*In co-operation with parents and guardians, we work towards the spiritual, moral, social and academic development of each student.*

*Our wish is that our students will grow into happy, confident and responsible adults*

### **3. Admission Statement**

Loreto Secondary School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds (whether relating to the student or applicant)

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

These grounds have been construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000). Please also note the following:

- As Loreto Secondary School is an all-girls' school it does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission.
- Loreto Secondary 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 nor if the needs are deemed such that the school cannot meet the needs of the student – see relevant sections of this policy.

Within the context and parameters of the D.E.S. regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron, as set out in the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018, the Religious and Educational Ethos of the school and the funding and resources available from the D.E.S., the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness: as an educational establishment, Loreto Secondary School is particularly mindful of its philosophy of inclusivity with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs
- Equality of access and participation in the school;
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment in the context of the criteria laid down by the Board of Management;

#### **4. Categories of Special Educational Needs Catered for in the Special Class**

Loreto Secondary School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with a Moderate General Learning Disability

#### **5. Admission of Student**

5.1 Loreto Secondary School shall only refuse to admit a student in the following circumstances:

- The school is oversubscribed (see below for further details)
- 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 the code by the student
- The application is made on behalf of a boy. Loreto Secondary School provides education exclusively for girls.
- The application is made on behalf of a girl for a place in our Special Class that caters for girls diagnosed with a Moderate General Learning Disability and the girl does not qualify for a place in the class as outlined below.
- The student will not have reached her twelfth birthday before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January that falls during her first academic year in the school. (Department of Education and Skills' regulation).

5.2 The Board of Management shall publish the following information (the school admission notice) on an annual basis on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> of September on the school website ([www.loreto.kk.ie](http://www.loreto.kk.ie)) or make it available in hard copy where a request is made in writing:

- The date from which applications will be accepted (not sooner than the 1<sup>st</sup> of October);
- The closing date for receipt of applications;
- The date on which parents will be notified if a school place is being offered;
- The date by which parents must confirm the acceptance of an offer of a place;
- The number of student places available for admission for the following school year;
- the number of places being made available in the special class;
- Where the school was oversubscribed for applications for 1<sup>st</sup> year or a special class in the previous year, a statement setting out the number of applications received and the number and order of offers made in that school year by reference to each of the school's selection criteria, will be provided.

5.3 The Board of Management shall determine the number of student places available for admission for the following (each) school year.

5.4 Applications must be made to the Principal, Loreto Secondary School, Granges Road, Kilkenny on the official school application form for the year of entry.

5.5 The inclusion of false or misleading information in the application may lead to the withdrawal of an offer of a place.

5.6 Loreto Secondary School seeks to agree co-ordinated enrolment dates with other local post-primary schools to make the system more efficient in terms of the allocation of places and to reduce the time spent by applicants on waiting lists.

5.7 If a place is being offered, the letter of notification will require a written confirmation if the place is being taken up. This written confirmation must be received by the school by the time/date specified in the letter of notification/admissions notice. Should no such confirmation be received by this time, the place will be forfeited and offered to the next girl on the waiting list.

5.8 It is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) at all times during the application process to ensure that the school has the proper and current postal and email address and mobile phone number.

5.9 The following information is required from parents prior to enrolment.

- Student's name
- Student's date of birth (verified by a copy of the student's birth certificate – to accompany the application).
- Student's address
- Name of sisters currently/previously in Loreto and years attended
- Whether the application is for a place in the special class
- Current primary school and secondary school (if applicable)
- Parents' names, address(es), home and mobile numbers, email addresses.
- Declaration that the code of behaviour is acceptable to the applicant.

5.10 Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

- 5.11 If a student is not offered a place, the reasons why will be communicated in writing to the applicant. This letter will also inform parents of their daughter's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.
- 5.12 In the event of there being more applications for the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Loreto Secondary 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.
- 5.13 Placement on the waiting list of Loreto Secondary 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 (section 6).
- 5.14 Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see below for further details).

## 6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school receives (during the admission period outlined in the annual admissions notice) more applications than there are available in the First Year Class, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below. These selection criteria will be applied to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

### **Criteria, in order of priority, for the allocation of places in the event of oversubscription.**

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/past students
3. Daughters of eligible staff of Loreto Secondary School. Staff members will be deemed to be eligible if they are in the employment of the Board of Management on a non-casual basis, during normal school hours, for at least six months, and are reasonably expected to be still employed by the Board of Management at the time their daughter commences in Loreto Secondary School.
4. Girls currently enrolled in sixth class in a primary school within the catchment area of Loreto Secondary School. The list of schools in the catchment area can be found in an appendix to this policy.

5. Girls enrolled in sixth class (or equivalent) in a primary school outside of the catchment area

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (i.e. the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

- Places will be offered in the order of priority outlined above.
- When the number of girls in a category exceeds the number of available, remaining places, a lottery confined to the girls within the given category will take place.
- A lottery is then conducted to offer places to applicants in each subsequent category as required.
- The above mentioned lotteries will be supervised by two observers, external to the school.
- In the event of a lottery taking place, 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 lottery.
- 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.
- In all cases, when a lottery is being conducted, applications received on behalf of twins, triplets, or sisters from the same family unit will be treated as one applicant.
- Late applicants will be placed on the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis.
- The Board of Management is aware, based on previous years' offers and acceptances that not all offers of a place will be accepted. Consequently, and with a view to minimising the period that applicants will be on a waiting list, offers in excess of the number of available places may be issued until such time as the number of available places is filled.

## 7. What Will Not be Considered or Taken into Account

The following will **not** be taken into consideration when offering places:

- The date of receipt by the school of a 'mailing list' form will **not** be taken into account when allocating places.
- The payment of fees or contributions will **not** be taken into consideration.
- A student's academic ability, skills or aptitudes will **not** be taken into consideration (other than when the application is for admission to the special class).

- The occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of the student's parents will not be taken into consideration.
- Attendance at our open night will not be taken into consideration when offering a place.
- A student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended will not be considered (except for when the family member is a sister who attends or previously attended Loreto Secondary School).
- The date or time upon which the application was received will not be taken into consideration subject to the application having been received by the specified closing date for applications in the given year. 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

Decisions made in relation to allocation of places will be in accordance with:

- This admission policy
- The 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

(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 she was 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 Loreto Secondary School, 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, details of the offer or offers concerned must be provided and..
- (ii) whether or not they have applied for and are 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.

Other information sought will enable the school to fulfil its administration functions and certain information sought by the Department of Education and Skills. Parents will also be facilitated to submit information to enable the school to support and care for the student in every possible way.

## **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 Secondary 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 annual admission notice of the school.
- 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
- an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

## **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.

## **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 Loreto Secondary 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 Loreto Secondary 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.

Applicants will be updated periodically in relation to their place on the waiting 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 admission policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

#### **15. Procedures for Admission of Students to Other Year Groups and During the School Year**

- Where parents wish to make an application 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.
- An offer of a place can only be made if there is space in the year group in question (as established by the Board of Management). A decision on whether a place can be offered will be conveyed to the parents within 21 days of the initial application.
- Applications made for a place in Transition Year or Fifth Year in the forthcoming academic year will be refused until the Principal has established the number of available spaces in each of these year groups, which will depend, in turn, on the number of existing Third Year students who progress to either year group. Such applications will be placed on a waiting list in date order of receipt until the number of available places in the relevant year group has been established by the Principal.
- 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/Deputy Principal to ensure that a transfer to the school would be in the best interests of their daughter. Parents should give consideration to curricular provision, subject choices/levels and

facilities available at the time. Curriculum provision will be constrained by the number of spaces available in individual subject classes, including the provision of different levels of study within each subject.

- 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. Note section 10 above in relation to acceptances.
- An offer of a place can be withdrawn in accordance with section 11 above
- If an application to enrol is refused on the basis of there being no space in the given year group, the parent will be asked if she/he wishes for her/his daughter to be placed on a waiting list. The prospective student will be placed on this waiting list in accordance with the date upon which the application was received by the school. In the unlikely event of there being more than one application received on any given day, the place on the waiting list for each applicant will be determined by lottery. This waiting list will remain valid until the commencement of the next academic year and offers of places that become available subsequently will be made in accordance with this list.

## **16. Declaration in Relation to the Non-charging of Fees**

The Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of:

- an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- 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 Loreto Secondary School without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student (if she has reached the age of 18) 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.

Date ratified: 22 April 2020

Signed: ***Tony Joyce***

## Chairperson, Board of Management

### 19. Appendices

Parents/Guardians of prospective students are advised to read carefully the appendices below prior to applying for a place in Loreto Secondary School.

#### APPENDIX 1 – Catchment Area

***For the purposes of this admission policy, the following schools are deemed to be within the catchment area:***

Kilkenny City	All of the city primary schools including Johnswell N.S.
Ballycallan	St. Aidan's N.S., Kilmanagh
Ballyragget	Ballyragget N.S.
Clara	Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmain
Conahy	Conahy N.S., Clinstown N.S. and Lisnafunchin N.S.
Danesfort	Burnchurch N.S., Church Hill N.S. and Danesfort N.S.
Freshford	St. Lachtain's N.S.
Gowran	St. Mary's N.S.
Lisdowney	St. Brigid's N.S. and Clontubrid N.S.
Muckalee	St. Brendan's N.S.
Paulstown	Scoil Bhride
Stoneyford	Scoil Náisiúnta Chiarain Naofa
Thomastown	St. Mary's N.S.
Tullaherin	Bennettsbridge N.S.
Tullaroan	Tullaroan N.S.

#### APPENDIX 2 - GENERAL INFORMATION

School Name: Loreto Secondary School  
Address: Granges Road, Kilkenny Phone Number: 056-7765132  
Email: [office@loretokk.ie](mailto:office@loretokk.ie) [principal@loretokk.ie](mailto:principal@loretokk.ie)  
Website: [www.loretokk.ie](http://www.loretokk.ie)

The school is a single-sex voluntary Catholic school for girls under the (Patron) trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust (see [www.lsnri.ie](http://www.lsnri.ie)) established on behalf of the sisters of the I.B.V.M. (Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary).

The school is managed by a Board of Management appointed to a three-year term of office. The Board of Management is appointed by the Loreto Education Trust and comprises four members nominated by the trustees, two parents (nominated by the parents) and two teaching staff members (nominated by the teaching staff).

### **Members of the Board of Management 2018-2021**

Mr Tony Joyce (Chairperson) – Trustee nominee

Mr Kieran Boland – Trustee nominee

Ms Nichola Read – Trustee nominee

Mr Nickey Cashin – Trustee nominee

Ms Majella Rafter – Teacher nominee

Mr Pdraig Fitzpatrick – Teacher nominee

Ms Catherine Peters – Parent nominee

Mr Michael Shields – Parent nominee

The principal, while not a member, is secretary to the Board of Management and attends all meetings without voting rights.

The school is committed to the principles which underpin the Education Act (1998), the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) and the Equal Status Acts (2000-2008) and other relevant legislation.

In-School Senior Management :

Principal: Mr. Colm Keher

Deputy Principals: Ms. Marie Thérèse Gallagher, Mr Eamon Jackman & Ms Marian Moran.

The school has a Parents Council and a Students Council.

**Opening Hours :** 8.00am to 3.55pm

After 3.55pm, the school is open only to those students who are present at supervised activities e.g. study, sport, orchestra, or other extra-curricular activities.

Classes commence at 8.45am and finish at 3.55pm. Classes finish at 1.30pm on Fridays.

### **Curriculum:**

We provide a broad-based education with a relevant and balanced curriculum subject to resource provision by the Department of Education and Science. Classes are organised on the basis of mixed ability (except for Mathematics). Students study all of the following subjects in **First Year**: Religious Education; Irish; English; Mathematics; History; Geography; French; German; Science; Art; Business Studies; Home Economics; Music; Choir; Physical Education (P.E.); Civic, Social & Political Education (C.S.P.E.) and Social, Personal & Health Education (S.P.H.E.), Artistic Performance and Digital Media Literacy. Each student is required to purchase a tablet device to access her school text books. The tablet must be purchased in accordance with school policy and technical specifications.

In **Second Year**, each student chooses five subjects from Art; Business Studies; French; German; Home Economics, History, Geography, Science and Music and continues with the study of English, Maths, Irish and Religious Education. Students also choose one of the following as a short course for their Junior Cycle: Artistic Performance or Digital Media Literacy. Every effort is made to facilitate this choice within the constraints of recognised class size limits, available resources and the limitations of the timetable.

In the senior cycle, all students must take **seven** Leaving Certificate subjects in addition to our programme of non-examination subjects. Exceptions are made only for students who qualify for an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with the regulations of the D.E.S. A reduced curriculum may also be considered upon the recommendation of an educational psychologist, the school's learning support department or Guidance Counsellors following full consultation with parents/guardians. The school will not be in a position to provide alternate tuition in such circumstance unless such resources have been allocated by the D.E.S.

In **Fifth Year**, students study Religious Education; S.P.H.E.; Information Technology; Physical Education (P.E.); Career Guidance; Irish; English and Mathematics together with four other subjects from History; Geography; French; German; Biology; Chemistry; Physics; Agricultural Science; Art; Business Studies; Accounting; Economics; Politics and Society, Home Economics; Music. Choir is also optional. All these subjects are offered to the extent that resources allow.

The school follows the curricular programmes for Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate as prescribed by the Department of Education & Skills which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998. The school also offers the option of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, Leaving Certificate Applied programme and the Transition Year programme, subject to demand in a given year and to the efficient use of available space and resources as funded by the D.E.S.

The school also offers a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities which may vary from year to year (see prospectus and school website).

### **Relationships and Sexuality Education**

All students receive Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) in accordance with the guidelines and regulations of the Department of Education and Skills. The course begins in January of First Year as part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) programme. Our programme emphasises the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual development of our students and is taught within the moral context of our ethos. Parents who have queries about the programme, can make contact with their daughter's S.P.H.E. teacher in the first instance. Our R.S.E. policy is available on our school website.

### **Guidance and Counselling**

Guidance and counselling is an integral part of the experience of students in Loreto Secondary School. The school employs the equivalent of two guidance counsellors who provide educational and guidance counselling to class groups and on a one-to-one basis, insofar as resources allow. Our Guidance Counsellors also provide personal counselling on a one-to-one basis. This will take place upon referral by the student herself, school personnel or parents/guardians. Further information regarding the school's guidance service is available on the school website or by contacting the school.

As with all services of the school, guidance and counselling is provided in line with Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Guidelines which have been adopted in full by the Board of Management. The Principal has been appointed as the Designated Liaison Person and a Deputy Principal as the Deputy Designated Liaison Person to operate their functions in accordance with the guidelines.

### **Religious Education:**



In framing this policy, Loreto Secondary School is conscious of its responsibility to provide an education in the Loreto tradition and to 'promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and to provide health education for them, in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school' (Education Act 1998). The school is also respectful of the individual rights of parents/guardians and their daughters.

"Continuing the Journey... a Loreto Education" states that 'while maintaining a Catholic ethos, Loreto schools welcome students of different faiths and of none. Multi-cultural and multi-faith dialogue is fostered. Inclusivity and the celebration of diversity are hallmarks of a Loreto school.'

Loreto Secondary School provides Religious Education classes and not Religious Instruction or Indoctrination. Religious Education classes are welcoming of all and are an ideal environment in which multi-faith dialogue can be fostered. Our R.E. Department follows a curriculum that includes the study of world religions and is respectful of all beliefs and of those with none. The course is designed such that success can be achieved regardless of a student's religious background. Cognisant of the ethos of the school, in the spirit of inclusivity and so that the school can satisfy the requirements of the Education Act, it is desirable that all students study Religious Education. Therefore it is a core/compulsory part of the school curriculum. The majority of our non-Catholic students attend R.E. classes.

### **Communication:**

Each student has a homework journal which may be used for two-way communication between home and school. Students keep a record of homework in their journal.

Reports are issued for the Christmas, Easter and Summer terms. Summer reports are not issued for students in Junior and Leaving Certificate years.

Parents have access to web-based, secure portal, through which they can access data in relation to their daughter (for example attendance data, academic progress, school reports, school events etc.).

A parent/teacher meeting is held once a year for each year group. Parents may also make appointments to meet with the relevant personnel (e.g. subject teacher, class tutor, year head etc.) as necessary.

### **Funding:**

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Skills (D.E.S.) and it operates within the regulations (circulars) issued by the D.E.S. At all times, the implementation of the school plan and school policies must have regard to the resources and funding available and the fair distribution of these resources.

The school seeks extra funding in the form of a voluntary contribution from parents on an annual basis in order to supplement D.E.S. funding. These contributions are used to provide resources and facilities for the education of the students. Furthermore, the school seeks a contribution towards expenses directly related to their own use of school resources such as photocopying, art materials, insurance, examination papers/answer books etc. In addition, the school also engages in fundraising activities to supplement D.E.S. funding. This fundraising often arises from the activities of the Parents' Council and, from time to time, the Board of Management will set up a sub-committee specifically for this purpose.

### **APPENDIX 3**

#### **Frequently asked questions**

**This section, entitled *Frequently Asked Questions*, does not form part of the official school Admission policy which is the only document that governs admission to Loreto Secondary School. This section is intended as a guide only and where any conflict arises between the official school Admission policy and this document, at all times the contents of the official Admission policy shall prevail.**

1. **How do I apply for a place in Loreto Secondary School?** If your daughter is in primary school, you should apply for a place when she is in sixth class. In September of the year when your daughter is in Sixth Class, official application forms for the following year's First Year class will be issued. An admission notice will also be published at this time. This will outline the timeline for the process. Application forms must be submitted by the closing date specified on the application form (usually in October). In the meantime, you might like to have your daughter's details placed on our mailing list. Application forms will be emailed to those on our waiting list and circulated to the primary schools within our catchment area.

2. **How many places will be available in First Year?** This is decided annually by the Board of Management. This decision is made on the basis of the availability of resources, class sizes, overall numbers and space in the school and other issues affecting the efficient management of learning and teaching. The number of available places will be included on the admission notice.
3. **I will not be able to submit the application until near the closing date, will this decrease my daughter's chance of getting a place?** There is no advantage in submitting your application early during the application period as long as it is received before the end of the closing date. In accordance with a legal requirement, applications received before the date specified in the admissions notice will be deemed invalid.
4. **What happens if my application is late?** Late, valid applications will be allocated places on the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis after all applications received before the closing date have been allocated a place or have been placed on the waiting list. In a year that the demand for places is high, it would be unlikely that late applicants would receive an offer of a place.
5. **My daughter has a sister currently in Loreto, will she definitely be offered a place?** Sisters of past and present students are given the second highest priority when places are being allocated and are almost certain to receive an offer of a place. However, if your application is late, she may not receive an offer.
6. **I have received a letter to say that my daughter is not being allocated a place but is on a waiting list. What is the likelihood that she will be offered a place at a later date?** Your daughter's place on the waiting list will be indicated in the letter. This may give an indication of the likelihood that your daughter will receive an offer of a place. You might like to contact the school for advice. It is normal for offers to be made to applicants who were originally on the waiting list, however the number of applicants on the waiting list who will eventually be offered a place varies from year to year and is hard to predict. In any given year there is a very significant number of places offered to those originally on the waiting list.
7. **How do I have my daughter's details put on the school's mailing list?** You should submit a 'Mailing List Form' which is available in the enrolment section of our website, [www.loretokk.ie](http://www.loretokk.ie), or which can be obtained by contacting the school.
8. **My daughter is in sixth class, but she is not on the Loreto mailing list. Will she have a**

**chance of getting a place in next year's 1<sup>st</sup> Year class?** Length of time spent on the mailing list makes no difference to an application. Offers of places are made on the basis of the application form as received in October. Please refer to section three of the policy which shows how places will be allocated when there are more applicants than places available.

9. **What is the 'catchment area'?** The school gives a priority to applicants who are currently attending schools within a certain area. The full list of these schools is in appendix 1 of the Admission policy. If there are more applicants from within the catchment area than there are available places, a lottery will be used to allocate places. Our catchment area is based on the primary school your daughter is currently attending and not on home addresses.
10. **My daughter is currently attending a school that is not within the catchment area, will she have a chance of being offered a place in Loreto?** This will depend on the demand for places in the given year and is difficult to predict. If you wish for your daughter to attend Loreto, you should make an application in any case. Her number on the waiting list (if she is not allocated a place) may give an indication of the likelihood of her getting a place. If your daughter has or had a sister in the school she may qualify for a place on that basis.
11. **My daughter is attending an Irish college for the duration of Sixth Class, but up to then had been a student of a primary school within the catchment area. Will she qualify as a student within the catchment area?** To be considered as a student within the catchment area, your daughter must be enrolled in one of the primary schools on the list in section three of the policy **at the time of application** and will be treated on the same basis as an applicant from outside the catchment area.
12. **My daughter has special needs. What should I do?** Please enclose all available reports/assessments with the application. Please read the relevant section of the policy.