



LORETO SECONDARY SCHOOL KILKENNY

ADMISSIONS POLICY

This policy is reviewed periodically by the Board of Management and is subject to change.

INTRODUCTION

Loreto Secondary School, Kilkenny is a recognised post-primary school for girls under the Education Act (1998) and it operates under the relevant legislation, under ministerial regulations and the Inspectorate of the Department of Education & Science (D.E.S.). The Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School, Kilkenny is setting out this admissions policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998), Section 15 2(d), and the ethos of the school. The Board of Management trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The chairperson of the Board of Management and the principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management in the administration of the admissions policy, will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

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

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."

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1	School Name :	Loreto Secondary School
	School Address:	Granges Road, Kilkenny
	Phone Number:	056-7765132

Fax Number: 056-7765131
Email: office@loretokk.ie principal@loretokk.ie
Website: www.loretokk.ie

- 1.2 The school is a single-sex voluntary Catholic school for girls under the (Patron) trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust established on behalf of the sisters of the I.B.V.M. (Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary).
- 1.3 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 trustees and is composed of four members nominated by the trustees, two nominees of the parents and two teaching staff members nominated by the teaching staff.

Members of the Board of Management 2009-2012

Mr. Martin Hanrahan (Chairperson) – Trustee appointment
Mr Martin Crotty – Trustee appointment
Fr. Martin Delaney - Trustee appointment
Sr. Brigid Tunney - Trustee appointment *
Mr. Simon Carroll – Teacher nominee
Ms Marita Walton-Lanigan - Teacher nominee
Ms. Nichola Read – Parent nominee
Ms Michelle Quigley – Parent nominee *

****new nomination to be appointed for October 2011***

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.

- 1.4 In-School Management : Principal: Mr. Colm Keher
 Deputy Principal : Ms. Marie Thérèse Gallagher
- 1.5 The school has a Parents' Council and a Students' Council.
- 1.6 **Opening Hours :** 8.00am to 4.00pm
After 4.00pm, the school is open only to those students who are present at supervised activities e.g. study, sport, orchestra, or other extra-curricular activities.
- 1.7 **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. 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.).

In **Second Year**, each student chooses three subjects from Art; Business Studies; French; German; Home Economics and Music and continues with the study of all other subjects. Every effort is made to facilitate this choice within the constraints of recognised class size limits, available resources and the limitations of the timetable. One of their chosen subjects must be a language, however exceptions may be made for students who are in receipt of resource teaching or learning support, following full consultation with parents/guardians. Please see section four of this document.

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; Art; Business Studies; Accounting; Economics; 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 Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes as prescribed by the Department of Education & Science 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).

1.8 Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling is an integral part of the experience of students in Loreto Secondary School. The school employs 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. In addition to our permanent Guidance Counsellors, the Board of Management has made available the services of a member of the staff who is also a qualified counsellor. 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 the Deputy Principal as the Deputy Designated Liaison Person to operate their functions in accordance with the guidelines.

1.9

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.

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.

1.10

Funding :

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Science and it operates within the regulations (circulars) laid down from time to time 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.

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 charges students for 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' Association and, from time to time, the Board of Management will set up a sub-committee specifically for this purpose.

1.11

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 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, particularly 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;
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

2. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

2.1 The Board of Management shall determine annually the number of student places available for admission for the following school year. The determining factors in this decision would include:

- a) Department of Education & Science provision of staff;
- b) Department of Education & Science provision of resources to meet the needs of students with special needs.
- c) Department of Education & Science provision of physical space in relation to classroom accommodation and health & safety of students.

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

The inclusion of false information in the application will lead to the withdrawal of an offer of a place at any time.

The **opening** date for receipt of applications is the **first** Monday in October of the year prior to admission. The **closing** date is the **third** Monday of October of the same year. Applications will not be accepted before the first Monday in October. Accordingly, applications received by post or otherwise prior to that date, and submitted on the official application form for the year of entry, will be deemed to have been received on the first Monday of October.

The date of receipt of a 'mailing list' form will not be taken into account when allocating places. Requests for places **not** submitted on the official application form for the year of entry will **not** be processed. Parents/Guardians may submit a 'Mailing List Form' (available at www.loretokk.ie in the enrolment section, or by contacting the school office). By doing so, parents and their daughter's details will be placed on a mailing list and the correct application form for the year of entry will be posted in the September in which the potential applicant is in Sixth class. No responsibility is accepted by the school for ensuring that application forms are received by any potential applicant. The duration which the applicant has spent on the mailing list has **no** bearing on the decision to offer a place in the given year.

2.3 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). Copies of the policy and application forms will also be distributed to primary schools within the catchment area.

2.4 For the purposes of Section 19 of the Education Welfare Act (see appendix), the date of the provision of relevant information by the parents is deemed to be the **third** Monday of October. Parents will therefore be notified in writing of the

decision to offer or not to offer a place within 21 days of the third Monday of October (in accordance with Section 19 of the Education Welfare Act (see appendix).

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 4p.m. on the last working day in October as specified in the letter of notification. Should no such confirmation be received by this time, the place will be forfeited and offered to the next girl on the waiting list.

It is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) to contact the school office if they change address or if they have not received a letter from the school within one week of the third Monday of October.

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

- Daughter's name, age, date of birth, P.P.S.N. (Personal Public Service Number), address and birth certificate
- Parents' or guardians' names, addresses, telephone numbers (home, mobile and emergency contact number).
- Details of relevant medical conditions.
- Details of disabilities or any special educational needs of student.
- Religious denomination.
- Previous and current schools attended by the student.
- Reasons for transfer of student, if applicable, together with information and records from previous (present) school.
- Relevant information, if applicable, regarding student custody, access arrangements and court orders pertaining to the student.
- Other information that may be required by the school or the Department of Education and Science and as specified in the application form for the given year.

3. ALLOCATION OF PLACES

3.1 Decisions made in relation to allocation of places are in accordance with :

- a) Criteria laid by the Board of Management.
- b) Department of Education & Science rules: secondary students must be aged 12 on January 1st in the calendar year following the student's entry into First Year (Birth Certificate is required.)
- c) Prior to registration and admission to the school, the parent(s) shall be required, as a condition of such registration and admission, to confirm in writing that they have read:
 - i) The school's mission statement and that it is acceptable to them;
 - ii) The school's code of behaviour and that they will make all reasonable effort to ensure that their daughter will comply with the code. Parents are asked to sign a statement affirming their support of this code on an annual basis.

Criteria in order of priority for allocation of places

(These will apply if applications received prior to the closing date exceed the number of available places as determined by the Board of Management)

1. Sisters of present/past students (provided application is in by due date).
2. Daughters of eligible staff of the school (provided application is in by due date). (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, Kilkenny.)
3. Girls currently (at the time of application) enrolled in Sixth Class in a primary school within the catchment area of Loreto Secondary School, Kilkenny (provided application is in by due date).

For the purposes of this admissions 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	St. Brigid's Girls 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 Bhríde
Stoneyford	Scoil Náisiúnta Chiarain Naofa
Thomastown	St. Mary's N.S.
Tullaherin	Bennettsbridge N.S.
Tullaroan	Tullaroan N.S.

Procedure that will apply when the number of applicants from within the catchment area exceeds the number of remaining available places

In the event that the number of applications from girls attending schools within the above-defined catchment area exceeds the number of remaining available places, these places will be allocated on the basis of a lottery confined to applications from girls attending primary schools within the above-defined catchment area. This lottery will be supervised by two observers, external to the school. In this circumstance, girls (from within the catchment area) who are not allocated a place at this stage, will be placed on a numbered waiting list in the order in which they were drawn in the lottery. Subsequent places on the waiting list will be filled in the order in which applicants are drawn in a lottery of all remaining valid applicants (i.e. girls from outside the defined catchment area.) Parents shall be informed of their daughter's place on the waiting list.

Procedure that will apply when the number of applicants from within the catchment area is less than the number of remaining available places

In the event that places remain having allocated places to girls attending schools within the catchment area, all other applications received prior to the closing date will be allocated places on the basis of a lottery, supervised by two observers, external to the school. Applicants who do not receive a place at this stage 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.

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. This will neither increase nor reduce the chances of any applicant being offered a place.

- 3.3 Any application deemed to be in accordance with this policy, but received subsequent to the closing date and before the commencement of the academic year, will be allocated a place or will be added to the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis.

4. ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Loreto Secondary School welcomes students with special needs and will use the financial and human resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs up to a nominal cost so that these students are free to participate in the life in the school in so far as it is reasonably practicable.

While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to accept students with particular needs is dependent on the supply of resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the Department of Education and Science.

Loreto Secondary School welcomes applications from students with special educational needs unless the nature and degree of these needs is such that to enrol the student would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated.

The Board of Management must be made aware of any special needs as early as possible, so that these needs can be assessed and addressed where possible.

Parents are requested to outline the details of a child's special educational needs on the application form.

The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of these students can be met.

Contact will be made with the National Council for Special Educational Needs regarding special needs resources to which the student may be entitled.

The principal may request a meeting with the parents of the student to discuss the application and the student's needs.

The parents of the student may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the student's educational or other needs.

N.B. It may take some time for the Department of Education and Science to process such applications. Parents are strongly advised to inform the school as early as possible and discuss their particular situation well in advance of making an application.

As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days, after a parent/guardian has provided all the relevant information, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parents/guardians in writing thereof. (Education Welfare Act (Section 19 (3))).

The Board of Management will therefore:

- Request that the school Principal meet the parents/guardians to discuss the student's needs and the school's capability to meet those needs.
 - Request a copy of the student's medical/psychological report/individual educational report if available.
- and/or
- Request immediate assessment.
 - Apply, prior to enrolment, to the D.E.S. for the resources necessary to meet the needs of the student e.g. a special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, learning support, transport etc.

5. ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM OTHER SECOND-LEVEL SCHOOLS

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

- Student's name, age, date of birth, P.P.S.N. (Personal Public Service Number), address and birth certificate.
- Parents' or guardians' names, addresses, telephone numbers (home, mobile and emergency).
- Details of relevant medical conditions.
- Details of disabilities or any special educational needs of student.
- Religious denomination.
- Previous schools attended by the student.
- Reasons for transfer of student together with information and records from previous/present school e.g. reports, references, curricular needs, subject choice.
- Relevant information, if applicable, regarding student custody, access arrangements and court orders pertaining to the student.
 - Other information that may be required by the school or the Department of Education and Science and as specified in the application form for the given year.

5.2 In the event that the Board of Management is satisfied, based on the reports received, that there is a reasonable expectation that that applicant will comply with the schools' code of behaviour and the school's policy in relation to curriculum, the following criteria will also apply :

1. Space in a particular year. (In the case of a student wishing to enrol in the school at the start of an academic year, the Board of Management will have to establish the number of places in the given year having ensured that all existing students of the school can be catered for within each year group.)
2. The ability of the school to meet the needs of the student.
3. Waiting lists of successful applicants will be formed on a first-come, first-served basis (based on the date of receipt of a valid application).

5.3 Parents will be informed of the school's expectations regarding attendance and registration. Parents will also be informed of the date by which the student is expected to attend school to secure her place. Should the student not attend school by this time, and an acceptable reason has not been provided by her parents, the school will no longer hold the place which may then be allocated to another applicant.

6. THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT'S RIGHT TO REFUSE ENROLMENT

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could include the following:

1. The student has special needs such that, even with the additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or school property.

7. APPEALS

Parents/Guardians whose daughter has not been allocated a place in Loreto Secondary School may appeal this decision in the first instance to the Board of Management and subsequently, if necessary, to the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998).

Appeals to the Board of Management must be made within 21 calendar days from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians.

The appeals to the Department of Education and Science must be made within 42 calendar days from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians. The appeals application form can be downloaded from the website www.education.ie or obtained from the school office.

The final decision with regard to the enrolment of a girl in Loreto Secondary School, Kilkenny and with regard to all matters covered in this Admissions Policy, lies with the Board of Management. The Board of Management will review this policy periodically.

APPENDIX

Education Welfare Act – Section 19

- 1) The Board of Management of a recognised school shall not refuse to admit as a student in such school, a child, in respect of whom an application to be so admitted has been made, except where such refusal is in accordance with the policy of the recognised school concerned published under section 15 (2) (d) of the Act of 1998.
- 2) The parent of a child who has made an application referred to in *subsection (1)* shall provide the recognised school concerned such information as may be prescribed by the Minister.
- 3) As soon as practicable, but not later than 21 days, after a parent has provided, in accordance with *subsection (2)*, such information as may be prescribed by the Minister thereunder, the Board of Management of the school concerned shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof.

Equal Status Act – Section 7 (3) (C)

“An educational Establishment does not discriminate where the establishment is a school providing primary or post-primary education and the objective of the school is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values, it admits persons of a particular religious denomination in preference to others or it refuses to admit a person who is not of that denomination and, in the case of a refusal, it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.”

Date ratified : 26th April 2010

Signed : **Martin Hanrahan**
Chairperson

Frequently asked questions

This section, entitled *Frequently Asked Questions*, does not form part of the official school Admissions 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 Admissions Policy and this document, at all times the contents of the official Admissions 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. Application forms must be received by the school between the 1st and 3rd Monday of October. In the meantime, you might like to have your daughter's details placed on our mailing list. Application forms will be posted 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. In 2009, 144 places were allocated and in 2010, 150 places were allocated. The number of available places for the given year will be printed on the application form.
- 3. I will be out of the country during October, can I submit my daughter's application before the 1st Monday in October?** Yes. Applications that are received before the 1st Monday in October will be deemed to have been received on that date. However, your application must be submitted on the official application form for the year of entry. This form will be published in September of that year (it will also be available on the school website at that time). Please note that if your daughter is offered a place, you must confirm your acceptance of the place by the last working day in October. Therefore, you must ensure that you are available to provide that written confirmation on time. Otherwise, the place will be offered to another applicant.
- 4. I will not be able to submit the application during the first week of October, 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.
- 5. What happens if my application is late?** Late 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.
- 6. My daughter has a sister currently in Loreto, will she definitely be offered a place?** Sisters of past and present students are given the first priority when places are being allocated and are the most likely applicants to receive an offer of a place. However, if your application is late, she would be unlikely to receive an offer.
- 7. 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.

8. **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, or which can be obtained by contacting the school.
9. **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 1st 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.
10. **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 section three of the Admissions Policy. If there are more applicants from within the catchment area than there are available places, a lottery will be used to allocate places.
11. **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.
12. **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.
13. **My daughter has special needs. What should I do?** Please enclose all available reports/assessments with the application. Please read section four of the policy.