



ADMISSIONS POLICY

(According to the provisions of the Education Act 1998)

Loreto College Swords is a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School for girls only, under the trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust and committed to the principles of the Loreto Education Philosophy.

The school operates within the free education scheme, under the Articles of Management for Voluntary Catholic Secondary Schools, and within the rules laid down by the Department of Education and Skills. The school depends on Department of Education and Skills funding in relation to grants and teacher allocation. Therefore, all aspects of this policy are within the context and parameters of the funding and resources available from and provided by the Department of Education and Skills.

Having regard to the resources available and provided (referred to above), the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness
- Equality of access and participation in the College
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment in the College
- Respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in Irish society.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The following criteria will be applied for applications to the College for enrolment in First Year. Students are required to be in 4th Class in Primary School at the time of the Selection Process.

For such enrolments, Loreto College Swords will only accept **female** students who **at the time of the Selection Process**, satisfy one of the following criteria. The criteria are divided into three categories. **Please be aware that it must be stated on the Declaration of Interest Form if you wish to be considered in Category A.**

Category A

- (i) Sister of a present student in Loreto College Swords where present student is defined to include one who is at the time of the Selection Process enrolled and offered a place but not yet attending the College
- (ii) Sister of a past student in Loreto College Swords, where past-student is defined as one who has completed at least one academic year in the College.

- (iii) Daughter of eligible staff in the College where eligible staff is defined as non-casual employees employed by Loreto College, Swords for a minimum of one academic year and who are reasonably expected to be employed by the school at the time their daughter commences Secondary School.
- (iv) Daughter of eligible past staff in the College where eligible past staff is defined as non-casual former employees of Loreto College, Swords who have completed a minimum of three academic years employment in the College.
- (v) Daughter of a present or past member of the Board of Management of Loreto College, Swords who has served for a minimum of one academic year.
- (vi) Daughter of a past student of Loreto College Swords or Loreto College Secondary School, North Great Georges Street¹ who is attending one of the schools named in Category B or Category C.
- (vii) The Board of Management reserves the right to allocate place(s) to female applicant(s)
 - whose family circumstances the Board of Management deems to be exceptional
 - and**
 - of which the Board of Management has been informed in writing on the Declaration of Interest Form.
 - Please be advised that any Declaration of Interest Form seeking eligibility under this sub-category should be submitted to the Board of Management well in advance of the relevant closing date.
 - This right of the Board of Management to allocate a place(s) under this sub-category ends before the Random Selection Process takes place.

All places in Category A will be allocated prior to the Selection Process involving Categories B & C. The places then remaining of the 120 total will be allocated according to the Selection Process to applicants from Categories B & C.

Category B

Only female applicants from any one of the following; Holy Family Primary School, Rivervalley, Swords, St Colmille's Primary School, Swords or St Cronan's Primary School, Brackenstown, Swords.

Category C

Only female applicants from any one of the following: Scoil an Duinnínigh, Scoil Bhriain Bóroimhe, Swords, Old Boro Primary School, Swords, Swords Educate Together N.S., Our Lady's N.S. Oldtown, St. Brigid's, Rolestown, Ballyboughal N.S, Thornleigh Educate Together and Holywell Educate Together.

Declaration of Interest Forms

1. A past student is defined as one who completed at least one academic year in the College. In a case of doubt, the onus to prove the status of a past student rests with that person.

Declaration of Interest Forms are available by request from the General Office or by forwarding a stamped addressed envelope to the College. An information document on Loreto College Swords and the Admissions Policy are available with the Declaration of Interest Form.

Information letters about the availability of all documentation will be distributed to each Primary School listed above in Categories B and C for the attention of 3rd/4th Class female students. The responsibility to apply within the time frame rests with the applicant.

Declaration of Interest Forms from each Category A, B and C must be submitted before the closing date. Any valid form received after the relevant date will be deemed late and the student will be placed at the end of the waiting list. The Board of Management does not accept any responsibility for late applications or applications for which no receipt (carbon copy) is available.

Acceptance of Declaration of Interest Forms

Declaration of Interest Forms will only be accepted from applicants in 4th/3rd Class, but please note that the closing date will be the last working day (Monday to Friday) in September when the applicant is in 4th Class.

Forms are accepted through the post or by hand to the General Office at the College. If sent by post, the envelope should be marked 'Declaration of Interest'

Only those who have completed Declaration of Interest Forms and returned them so as to reach the College by the relevant closing date will be eligible for inclusion in the selection process. Valid forms received after this date will be placed at the end of the waiting list which will be drawn up in the selection process.

The College will date and stamp the Declaration of Interest Form. A carbon copy, which should be retained as a receipt, will be sent to you within five working days of receipt of the form by the College. Please contact the College if you do not receive a reply following your submission of the form.

It should be noted that only one Declaration of Interest Form may be completed in respect of any one child for any one year.

It is the responsibility of the Parents / Guardians to notify the College of any change of details provided on the Declaration of Interest Form.

SELECTION PROCESS

Procedures for offering places

In the event that there are more Declaration of Interest Forms than places available in the relevant year, the Board of Management will apply the following criteria in the following order in the allocation of places.

First priority will be offered to students in Category A. As part of the Selection Process all places in Category A will be assigned prior to the Random Selection Process involving Categories B & C

The number of places to be offered to students in each school in Category B and to all schools in Category C will be on a percentage pro-rata basis directly proportional to the number of valid forms received from each of the schools in Category B and from all the schools in Category C. (See example below.)

A random process (see below) will be used to select those students from each school in Category B to whom an offer of a place will be made. A similar but separate random process will be used to select those students from all schools in Category C to whom an offer of a place will be made.

Each of the random processes will be overseen by the Principal and witnessed by a member of the Board of Management, a member of the Parents' Association and an Independent Observer.

Percentage Pro-rata allocation of places

The following sample numbers give an explanation of the method of allocation of places to the schools in Categories B and C.

Total Number of Places for enrolment	Number of Places filled from Category A	Number of remaining places for Categories B and C
120	30	90

Students from Categories B and C					
		Number of forms received	Percentage of total Forms	Applying % to available places	Number of places to be allocated
<u>Category B</u>	School 1	50	35.7%	35.7% of 90 = 32.1	32
	School 2	40	28.6%	28.6% of 90 = 25.7	26
	School 3	30	21.4%	21.4% of 90 = 19.3	19
<u>Category C</u>	All Schools	20	14.3%	14.3% of 90 = 12.9	13
Totals		140	100%		90

Rounding up or down to the next nearest whole number. In the event of there being more than one result ending in .5, then the extra place(s) shall be assigned to the higher of those results in descending order.

Random Selection Processes

In the Random Selection Process places will be assigned to categories B & C. The name of each student entitled to participate in this selection process will be placed in four containers – one container for each of the schools in Category B and one container for Category C. A member of the Board of Management will draw names from each container, one by one, until the maximum number of places allocated for each school in Category B and all the schools in Category C is reached.

The order in which the names are drawn from the container will be recorded on a numbered list. Places will be offered in the order in which names are drawn from the container until the available places are filled.

The remaining names in each container will be placed in one single container and a second similar random process will take place to establish a single numbered waiting list.

Please Note: Where there are Declaration of Interest Forms from two or more sisters in the one random selection process, then upon the selection of one of their number, all of the sisters names are deemed selected. Where there are insufficient places available in the relevant sub-category or category, the name(s) of that sister(s) is automatically placed at the beginning of the single numbered waiting list.

The Board of Management will allocate the 120 places to Categories A, B and C and allocate a place on the single waiting list to the remaining applicants.

Offer of Places

Parents / Guardians will be notified in writing within 21 days of the random selection process with an offer of a place or a number on the waiting list.

Parents / Guardians who wish to accept the offer of a place must return the fully completed Offer Acceptance Form before the relevant closing date – the relevant closing date will be notified to them when an offer of a place is made.

Any Acceptance Forms received after the relevant closing date will be deemed late and the place so offered shall be forfeited.

WAITING LIST

The numbered waiting list will be used by the College to offer any places which may become available between the initial offer of places and the first school day of the year in which the students begin First Year in Loreto College. At this time the waiting list will be cancelled and applicants on that list so notified.

A female student, who wishes to reapply to Loreto College, following the cancellation of the waiting list may do so by completing a new Declaration of Interest Form. If a place becomes available in the relevant First year and if the proposed transfer is deemed appropriate by the Principal, the place will be offered to the female student whose name is drawn in a random selection process, carried out by the Principal and overseen by the Chairperson of the Board of Management (or member of Board of Management nominated by the Chairperson) and a member of the Parents' Association. A separate random selection process shall be carried out each time a place in the relevant First year becomes available.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Within the overall criteria for enrolment in the College and having regard to the facilities and services available in the school, the school welcomes female students with disabilities and/or special educational needs.

In order to assess the requirements of a student with special needs, to organise the resources necessary for her education and to fulfil its duty of care, the Board of Management requires the following information from the parents/guardians on receipt of application:

- an indication of the student's needs
- a copy of the student's medical/psychological report
- an individual education plan, if this is available.

If a report is not available, parents/guardians will be asked to have the child assessed immediately. The purpose of this assessment is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report(s), the Board of Management will assess in consultation with Principal how the school can meet the needs specified. If the Board deems that further resources are required, it may, prior to commencement into the relevant school year and in cooperation with the parents/guardians, request the Special Education Needs Officer and the Department of Education and Skills to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child.

TRANSFER OF STUDENTS

In the case of female students seeking to transfer from another post-primary school or seeking readmission into any year from Second to Sixth year inclusive, the following procedures apply: Parents/guardians who request a place for their daughter(s) in a class in which a place may be available will meet with the Principal or the Deputy Principal. Parents/guardians will be requested to complete a Declaration of Interest Form.

All relevant data, to include attendance, school reports (as per the Education Welfare Act 2000) concerning the student may be sought by the Principal from the Principal of the school which the student is currently attending or has most recently attended.

The Principal must be satisfied that the transfer to the school shall be in the best interests of the student concerned, given curricular provision, subject choices, facilities available at the time and any other relevant factors affecting the educational benefits to the student seeking a place and the likely impact on students already in the school and the operation of the school in general.

A decision about the transfer of the student shall be made by the Principal and parents/guardians will be notified in writing, within 21 days of the interview subject to all the required data having been received by the Principal.

In the event of there being more than one application for a particular year, places will be offered on a first come first served basis, having considered the above guidelines.

RIGHT OF REFUSAL

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

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

QUERIES

Parents/Guardians are welcome to telephone or visit the school should they have any queries regarding The Admissions Policy or the enrolment/application procedures.

REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The Admissions Policy is subject to review at the discretion of the Board of Management but sufficiently in advance to allow changes to be communicated to interested parties. Parents/Guardians should ensure that this is the current Admissions' Policy and that they follow its provisions.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998), parents / guardians have the right to appeal a refusal by the College to enrol a student. The appeal to the Department of Education and Science must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the College was notified to the parents/guardians

RATIFICATION

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on February 2014.
This policy is also published on the school website at www.loretoswords.ie