

## Admission Policy

**Patron: Catholic Archbishop of Dublin Roll Number 00779u**

### 1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Acts 1998- 2018, as amended, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting the policy, the Board of Management ("**BoM**") has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of pupils attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on **23/01/2023**. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Presentation Girls' School admission process are set out in the school's Annual Admission Notice, which is published on the school's website one week before the commencement of the admission process.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Annual Admission Notice for the school year concerned.

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

### 2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Presentation Girls' School is an all-girls vertical Catholic school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin ('**the Patron**'). "Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

(a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and

(b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and

(c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and

(d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith, and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic

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spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Presentation Girls' 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.

Presentation Girls' School seeks to provide a broad and balanced education in an atmosphere of mutual respect with an appreciation of the individual needs of pupils.

Presentation Girls' School operates under the Rules of National Schools and Department of Education ("DE") guidelines. The school is staffed in accordance with the schedule laid out each year by the DE and is funded by annual grant from the DE.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the DE, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act, 1998. The school programme is an eight year programme. Pupils enrolled follow this programme.

While recognising the right of parents/guardians ('**Parents**') to enrol their child in a school of their choice, the BoM reserves the right to determine maximum school and class size, in order to ensure the safety of all pupils and to provide for the educational needs of existing pupils.

This policy sets out the criteria used to determine admission into Junior Infants; admission into other classes and admission into the Early Intervention Class. It sets out the priority order, which will apply, where the number of applications for admission exceeds the number of available places. In doing so, the BoM has regard to available resources, directions from the Patron; Circulars from the Department of Education ('**DE**'); Pupil Teacher Ratio ('**PTR**'), school and class sizes etc.

The following is a list of factors taken into consideration by the BoM in devising its admission policy:

Overall school capacity: The DE sanctioned mainstream class teachers, (currently 26) and one Early Intervention Class.  
Availability of space in class rooms, play areas and overall site size

Health and Safety requirements, including school site, space  
Availability of grants and resources: The school depends on grants and resources from the DE and operates in accordance with regulations and circular letters issued from time to time by the DE.

Educational needs of existing pupils

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The arrangement of pupils into classes on an annual basis and the numbers in each class setting for teaching and learning, remains the prerogative of the Principal, subject to BoM approval.

### **3. Admission Statement**

Presentation Girls' School will not discriminate in its admission of a pupil, or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned, on any of the following grounds **of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned**

- (a) Gender
- (b) Civil status
- (c) Family status
- (d) Sexual orientation
- (e) Religion
- (f) Disability
- (g) Race
- (h) Special educational needs
- (i) Membership of the Traveller community

As per section 61(3) of the Education Admission to Schools Act, 2018, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act of 2000.

Presentation Girls' School will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council. Presentation Girls' School will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4) (b).

### **Additional Information**

Presentation Girls' School is an all-girls school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school.

Presentation Girls' School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a pupil a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Presentation Girls' School has established an Early Intervention Class for pupils with Autism, with the approval of the Minister for Education. This class provides education exclusively for pupils with autism and may refuse to admit to the class a pupil who does not have a diagnosis of autism.

### **4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for by Presentation Girls' School**

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## Early Intervention Class

Presentation Girls' School, with the approval of the Minister for Education, has established an Early Intervention Class to provide an education exclusively for pre-school pupils with a diagnosis of autism.

Pupils with special educational needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the DE and/or National Council for Special Education ('**NCSE**'). In the event that the applicant has special educational needs, a copy of the pupil's medical/psychological reports and/or a professional assessment of the pupil's needs should be submitted where available, so that provision can be made for that pupil's welfare and educational progress.

## 5. Admission of Pupils

The school shall admit each pupil seeking admission except where:

- a) the school is oversubscribed
- b) a parent of a pupil, 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/her and that s/he shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the pupil
- c) Presentation Girls' School provides education exclusively for girls and may refuse to admit a pupil who is not of the gender provided for by this school.
- d) The Early Intervention Class attached to Presentation Girls' School provides an education exclusively for pre-school pupils with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and the school may refuse admission to this class where the pupil concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs **provided for in this class**.
- e) Presentation Girls' School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a pupil a person who is not a Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school

## 6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the selection criteria identified in this policy, in the order listed to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's **Annual Admission Notice**.

## Admission of Pupils to Junior Infants

The following conditions must be met for admission into Junior Infants:

- A child must have reached his/her fourth birthday on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> August preceding the September in respect of which the application for enrolment into Junior Infants is made.

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- A fully completed enrolment application form, signed and dated, must be returned during the enrolment period and in any case not later than the closing date as specified in the Annual Admission Notice.
- **Pupils with Special Educational Needs:** The official application form must be used. This is available for download at [www.presgirlsmaynooth.ie](http://www.presgirlsmaynooth.ie) and/or in hard copy on request, from the school.
- A separate form must be used in respect of each child's application.

The following documentation **must accompany** a fully completed, signed and dated application form, in order for the application to be considered a "**complete application**":

- Copy of the applicant's birth certificate
- Proof of address, in the form of a utility bill in the name of one of the Parents, which must be dated no later than three months prior to the closing date.
- The BoM is not obliged to consider late and/or incomplete applications.
- Submitting inaccurate information on an application form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void *ab initio*. Where a place has been offered this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn and the place being reallocated. In the case of placement on a waiting list, it will result in removal from the waiting list. If the application for admission is successful and the place has been accepted as outlined in this policy and the Annual Admission Notice, the pupil shall be enrolled as per her name on her official birth certificate.

### **Criteria used to prioritise applicants for Junior Infants**

The criteria in priority order **1 – 3** below, are used to determine admission, where the number of applications received outnumbers the number of places available.

- 1. Siblings and stepsiblings of pupils currently enrolled and girls resident in the parish of Maynooth**
- 2. Children of staff members**
- 3. Girls residing outside the parish.**

**In the event of any one of the above categories being oversubscribed the oldest child in each category will have priority.**

### **Pupils tied for places**

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

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1. Applicants' ages will determine the outcome i.e. places will be offered beginning with the oldest eligible applicant in the oversubscribed category and proceeding in descending order of age from oldest to youngest, until all available places have been filled.
2. If an applicant falls into a number of categories the applicant will be placed in the category which affords her the highest priority.
3. If this process fails to offer a solution and two or more applicants remain tied for a place, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

### **7. What will not be considered or taken into account**

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Admission to Schools Act, 2018, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a pupil on a waiting list:

- a) A pupil's prior attendance at a pre-school
- b) Payment of fees or contributions to the school
- c) A pupil's academic ability, skills or aptitude, other than in relation to admission to the Early Intervention class, insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the pupil has the specified category of special educational needs
- d) The occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a pupil's parents
- e) A requirement that a pupil, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission
- f) A pupil's connection to the school by virtue of a member of her family having previously attended the school
- g) The date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school, subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications as set out in the Annual Admission Notice.

### **8. Decisions on Applications**

All decisions on applications for admission will be based on the following:

- The school's admission policy
- The school's Annual Admission Notice (**applicable to Junior Infants and Early Intervention Class only**)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in the Annual Admission Notice.

**[Please see sections 14 below in relation to applications received outside the application period and section 15 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group]**

Selection criteria not included in the school's admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in the school.

## 9. Notifying Applicants of Decisions

Applicants **for infant intake year** will be informed in writing of the decision regarding admission, within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admission Notice.

**Applicants for other classes will be informed in writing of the decision regarding admission, within 21 calendar days of receipt of a fully completed application.**

If a pupil is not offered a place in the school, the reasons why she was not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the pupil's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the pupil's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review of the decision by the BoM and/or the right of appeal to the DE. [**See section 18 below for details**]

## 10. Acceptance of an offer

In accepting an offer of admission from Presentation Girls' School, parents must indicate

(i) whether or not they have accepted an offer of admission for another school/s. If they have accepted such an offer, they must also provide details of the offer/s concerned and

(ii) whether or not they have applied for and are awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school/s, and if so, they must provide details of the other school/s **concerned**.

## 11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made/may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Presentation Girls' School where

(i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading

(ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the Annual Admission Notice

(iii) the parent of a pupil, 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/her and that s/he shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the pupil; or

(iv) 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

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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 pupils.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the pupils in relation to whom –

1. (i) an application for admission to the school has been received, 2. (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
3. (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- a. The date on which an application for admission was received by the school; b. The date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- c. The date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- d. A pupil's personal details including his/her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 2662 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005)

### **13. Waiting lists in event of Oversubscription**

In the event of oversubscription at a whole school level applicants will be placed on a waiting list, in priority order for the relevant class level, and will be offered a place if and when one becomes available.

### **14. Late Applications**

All applications for admission to Junior Infants or Early Intervention Class received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice will be considered, and decided upon in accordance with the schools admission's policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed on the waiting list in priority order for the relevant class level as per the date / time of receipt of the application.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application.

Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available at the relevant class level.

### **15. Procedures for Admission of Pupils to other years (any mainstream class) and during the school year**

The following criteria apply when an application for enrolment into any mainstream class (other than Junior infants) during the academic year is under consideration:



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- i. That optimum arrangements of existing pupils for teaching and learning purposes are maintained
- ii. That a place exists in the relevant class/es, taking all relevant circumstances into account e.g. needs of the existing pupils, presence of pupils with special educational needs, integration of pupils with special educational needs, presence of pupils with behavioural needs, space in classrooms, health and safety considerations etc.
- iii. That the current Pupil/Teacher ratio, as set by the DE, is maintained.

Pupils will be enrolled in age appropriate class/es once the following criteria have been met:

- The official application form, which is available to download from the school's website at [www.presgirlsmaynooth.ie](http://www.presgirlsmaynooth.ie) and/or in hard copy on request from the school, **is** fully completed, dated and signed by the Parents/Guardians. A separate form must be completed for each child.
- All requested documentation must be furnished i.e. a copy of the applicant's birth certificate, details of previous school attended where applicable
- The availability of a place, in a specific class, will be determined in the context of the overall number of pupils which the school can accommodate at the time the application is made and taking into consideration other relevant circumstances e.g. needs of the existing pupils, presence of pupils with special educational needs, presence of pupils with behavioural needs, space in classrooms, health and safety considerations, current pupil/teacher as set by the DE etc.

Submitting inaccurate information on an application form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void *ab initio*. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn and it being reallocated. In the case of placement on a waiting list, it will result in removal from the waiting list.

Written notification of the decision regarding the application will be issued to Parents within 21 calendar days of receipt of the fully completed, signed and dated application form.

Parents of applicants who have been offered a place must inform the school by completing and returning an enrolment acceptance form within 7 calendar days. Failure to do so will result in the place being forfeited and the place being reallocated.

If the application for enrolment is successful and the place has been accepted as outlined above, the pupil shall be enrolled as per her name on her official birth certificate.

Applicants who are not successful in securing a place for classes, will be placed on a waiting list.

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The date and time of receipt of a completed application will determine the order of priority on a waiting list for the relevant class level.

A place on a waiting list expires at the end of the academic year for which the application was made.

The BoM is not obliged to consider applications which are incomplete and/or not signed and /or not dated and/or do not include the required documentation.

### **Admission of Pupils to the Early Intervention Class**

The total number of places available is six.

Pupils enrolled for year 1 in the EIU have precedence for year 2. Retention of a place in the EIU for a second year must be confirmed in writing by Parent / Guardians by 20<sup>th</sup> October of the relevant calendar year. Ongoing placement for year 2 will be based on an annual review of the suitability of the placement in the Early Intervention Class to meet the needs of the pupil.

The following criteria apply to all applicants:

- Pupil must be aged between 3 and 5 years. A child who turns six during the academic year will not be deemed eligible for admission to the class.
- Pupil must have a primary diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and must submit a professional report, following a professionally recognised clinical/ psychological assessment procedure, which confirms a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder (DSM IV/V or ICD 10).
- Pupil must have a recommendation within the previous 12 month period by a clinical psychologist regarding suitability of pupil for attendance at an Early Intervention Class.
- Details of services already in place for the child must be submitted with the Enrolment Form. The school has no responsibility for the provision of such professional services to pupils attending the Early Intervention class. Each child must therefore be in receipt of support, or satisfactorily provide the school with evidence that the child is on a waiting list for services from the Children's Network Disability Team (CNDT) or Primary Care Team.
- A fully completed, signed and dated Enrolment form has been submitted to the school by the Parents/ Guardians and a vacancy exists in the Early Intervention class.
- If the application form is not fully completed, and/or all the required reports have not been furnished, the application will be deemed incomplete.
- Application period (including closing date) is specified on the Annual Admissions Notice which is available on the school website from 7<sup>th</sup> November.
- All applications received by the closing date will be assessed by the Early Intervention Class Advisory Board, who will advise the BoM on the application. This Advisory Board consists of the school Principal, Deputy Principal and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, and a member of BoM.

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- The BoM will decide on the acceptance or otherwise of the application.

*The Early Intervention Class provides education for pupils for a MAXIMUM OF TWO CONSECUTIVE YEARS*

If offered a place, the Parents must confirm in writing within 7 calendar days that the place is being accepted. If this confirmation is not received within that time, the school will take it that the place is not being accepted and the place will be reallocated.

In the event that the number of applicants seeking admission to the Early Intervention Class within the specified enrolment period exceeds the number of places available the following criteria will apply:

- **Siblings and stepsiblings of pupils currently enrolled in the school and children resident in the parish of Maynooth**
- **Children of staff**
- **Children residing outside the parish.**

Applicants who are not offered a place in the EIU, based on above criteria, will be placed on a waiting list in order of the above criteria above. **In the event of any one of the above categories being oversubscribed the oldest child in each category will have priority.**

The waiting list will be maintained for the duration of the academic year only, for which the application was initially made.

In exceptional circumstances, the school reserves the right to refuse enrolment where, based on reports submitted with the application

"It is not in the best interests of the child with special educational needs or it is inconsistent with the effective provision of education for the children with whom the child is to be educated" (Sec. 2 EPSEN Act 2004)

### **Placement in the Early Intervention Class**

Pupils will be "phased in" gradually to the Early Intervention Class through a mutually agreed process between the school and the Parents.

The individual needs of each pupil are constantly reviewed. A review of each pupil's progress and his/her Individual Education Plan will be carried out in consultation with Parents and other professionals where necessary or at least on an annual basis.

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

The Board of Presentation Girls' School, or any persons acting on its behalf, will not charge fees or seek payment or contributions as a condition of

- (a) An application for admission of a pupil to the school, or
- (b) The admission or continued enrolment of a pupil in the school.

### **17. Arrangements regarding pupils not attending religious instruction**

Where parents have requested that a pupil attends the school, without attending religious instruction, a written request should be made to the Principal requesting a meeting to discuss the matter.

### **18. Review / Appeals**

#### **Review of decisions by the Board of Management**

The parent of the pupil 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.

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 BoM **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.

#### **Appeal to DE**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the pupil, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) 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.

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.

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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.

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 DE.

**This policy was approved by the Patron on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and a review was approved by the Patron on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022.**

**It was approved by the Board of Management on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and the reviewed policy approved on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022. An amendment to the policy was approved by the Patron on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 and by the Board on 31st January 2023.**

Signed: Dhí Shugneáin Date: 31.01.23

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: Cora McGarry Date: 31.01.23

Principal