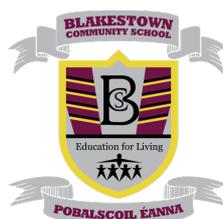


Blakestown Community School Admissions Policy

Education for Living





Blakestown Community School Admissions Policy

School Address: Sheepmoor Avenue, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 F978

Roll number: 91316Q

School Patrons: Le Chéile Schools' Trust and Dublin & Dún Laoghaire ETB

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1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the Board of Management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patrons and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 15th September 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Blakestown Community School admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Blakestown Community 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

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Blakestown School Community school is a co-educational, multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of The Le Chéile Schools' Trust and Dublin-Dún Laoghaire ETB.

Community Schools provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the local community. An innovative approach to delivery of a wide-ranging curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental, physical and social well-being of students within their community. Community Schools may also provide for life-long learning within their local community through the provision of adult education programmes.

Our school was established on a greenfield site under the Deed of Trust and opened on 1st September 1979. The values of DDLETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of the St Louis Sisters and the Servite Fathers (now represented by The Le Chéile Schools' Trust)



are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of Blakestown Community School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. These values combine to provide and support an atmosphere which is conducive to excellence in teaching and learning. We endeavour to assist each student to reach his/ her full potential in a calm, caring and creative environment.

Our values are reflected in how we live as a school community. The unique and intrinsic value of each member of the school community is recognised and respected. All are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability, disability or socio-economic status. All students are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018) construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000. Once enrolled, Blakestown Community School provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Blakestown Community School provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, culture or background. Our school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society.

Our school is multi-denominational where we welcome, respect and support students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

In Blakestown Community School, we celebrate the partnership, collaboration and empathy which nurtures and develops our young people in a community where the essence of our ethos is care and respect for self, others and our environment.

Mission Statement

Blakestown Community School is committed to developing our school community by fostering academic and personal development in an inclusive



and caring environment through enhancing the quality of learning for all our students.

School Aims

Blakestown Community School seeks to:

- educate students within a Christian and co-educational environment, which is multi-denominational, community-based, progressive and student-centred.
- cherish the unique contribution of each student and remain true to our motto, *Education for Living*.
- promote and facilitate the holistic development of all our students by stimulating their intellectual, creative, physical, social and artistic talents in an atmosphere of challenge and support.
- reinforce the self-esteem of our students through positive affirmation in an environment where effort will be recognised and rewarded
- pursue excellence in teaching and learning, confident of its value in society
- support our students as individuals as they travel through the formative life-phase of adolescence, as manifested in our guidance, counselling and pastoral support structures
- pursue the highest standards of learning and achievement for all students
- promote a sports and cultural programme that recognises and develops the talents of students, parents and teachers
- provide learning and leisure opportunities for the wider community, including parents, local residents and the employees of local businesses via the school's community education programme.

Summary

Blakestown Community School encourages all students to become confident, responsible and successful individuals who will make a positive contribution to society. All parties in the school will also strive to ensure that the learning community of students will experience an ambitious, supportive and caring spirit in the school cognisant of the array of talents, abilities and diverse needs of the student population.

The day to day management of the school, supported by all the resources of the school at its disposal, e.g. committed teachers and leaders, guidance counsellors, chaplain, HSCLO, learning support teachers and SNAs, will foster a community that is supportive and understanding of the diverse needs of the student body. They will create an atmosphere of belonging for all, establish activities, events and occasions

to foster and inspire students in keeping with the aims and objectives outlined in this Admissions Policy to enable the student body:

- To have the highest expectations of themselves and each other
- To show respect for all in the school community
- To tolerate and celebrate the diversity of our student body and our community
- To respect the dignity and ambition of others and to be ambitious for their own success in life by developing the skills they need for the future
- To develop as intellectually curious lifelong learners
- To be socially, environmentally, ethically and digitally responsible global citizens
- To actively promote and sustain their own emotional and physical wellbeing, to promote and respect that of others in our school and to foster a sense of responsibility and resilience

Our motto in Blakestown Community School is: ***Education for Living***

3. Admission Statement

Blakestown Community School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs



As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

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

4.1 Blakestown Community School **does not** have a special class. Blakestown Community School **does** welcome students with Special Educational Needs.

4.2 After enrolment, the school will meet with the parents to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those educational needs.

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where:

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [Section 6](#) below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student.

Additional Information

5.1 Blakestown Community School is a "recognised co-educational school" which depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). The school operates within the regulations laid down by the DES. The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with the Education Act (1998).

5.2 Enrolment is limited by school capacity and by the requirements of the school curriculum and organisation, as prescribed from time to time by the Board of Management and as determined by DES regulations and standards. For Health and Safety purposes it would be unsafe and a breach of Health and Safety



regulations, as well as bad educational practice, to breach school capacity. In assessing applications for admission, the school will take fully into account the right of parents/guardians to enrol their child in a school

- 5.3 Classes range from Junior Cycle to Leaving Certificate (including Leaving Certificate Applied, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and Transition Year). Transition Year is optional prior to admission to the Leaving Certificate course. The maximum class size allowed under present school policy is thirty for general classes and twenty/twenty-four for particular practical / skill-based classes. The Board of Management can set capacity for classes different to the agreed numbers.
- 5.4 Against the background and ethos outlined above, the key principles outlined in the Education Act underpin our Admissions Policy.
- 5.5 For the purposes of this policy, an application for enrolment is deemed to exist when a completed application form has been submitted to the school. A verifiable method of proof of submission will be provided to applicants for school places, in the form of a time-dated, school-stamped receipt. Application forms are available on the school website www.blakestowncs.ie or for collection from the school office during normal opening hours.
- 5.6 The Board of Management designates the school Principal to process enrolment applications on its behalf, in accordance with its Admissions Policy.
- 5.7 The parent(s) of a child, in respect of whom an application has been made, shall provide the recognised school concerned with such information as required under the Admissions Act
- 5.8 A process takes place at the end of each school year to confirm continuation to the following year/programme.

Incoming First Year Students

- 5.9 As per the Act, the Board of Management will prepare and publish the **Admissions Notice** each year at least one week prior to the school commencing its annual admission process. The following information will be included:

- 5.9.1 The date on which the school shall commence and cease accepting applications for admission to the school for the school year concerned, the application period.
 - 5.9.2 The date by which the applicant shall be notified of the decision in relation to their application.
 - 5.9.3 The date/period by which the applicant shall confirm acceptance of the offer of admission, the decision period.
 - 5.9.4 That the offer may be withdrawn if the applicant does not accept the offer of admission within the timeframe set out.
 - 5.9.5 The number of school places available in the intake group.
 - 5.9.6 In the case of where the school's intake group was oversubscribed in the year prior to the year for which admission is sought, the admission notice will include a statement setting out the number of applications received and the number and order of offers made in that school year in respect of each of the school's selection criteria
- 5.10 The enrolment process is by way of a written application form provided by the school. The application form will consist of a two-part process.
- 5.10.1 Part 1 must be completed and returned in line with the Admissions Notice dates for commencement of accepting applications and closing date for applications, the application period.
 - 5.10.2 A designated day will be decided during this application period to facilitate the smooth return of Part 1 of the application process. All applications received during the application period will be accepted in an equal way in line with the selection criteria in Section 6 of this policy.
 - 5.10.3 Part 2 of the application process will be included with the letter of offer. As applicants confirm their acceptance of an offer of a place for admission, Part 2 of the application process must also be completed and returned to the school with the Letter of Acceptance. The date for returning these will be in line with the Admissions Notice period within which applicants must confirm acceptance of an offer of admission.
 - 5.10.4 A designated day will be decided during this decision period to facilitate the smooth return of Part 2 of the application process and the letter of acceptance. Applicants will have the opportunity to return Part 2 of the application at any stage during this decision period.
 - 5.10.5 All applicants should have completed a full course of primary education or have followed an approved course (or its equivalent) if the student is from abroad.
 - 5.10.6 The applicant must have reached 12 years of age by the 1st January of their first year in Blakestown Community School.
 - 5.10.7 Applicants and their parents / guardians must be willing to accept the school's Code of Behaviour and Acceptable Use Policy and confirm this in writing.

5.11 The Board of Management's decisions made with regard to the admission of a student are subject to the right of the parents/guardians to ask for a review or appeal such decisions. Details of such are found under Section 18 of this policy.

6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

Selection criteria:

Students are admitted to the school, with priority given to the following students:

Category 1

- Siblings of students currently attending the school.

Category 2

- Students from the following Primary Schools in the following order:
 1. Scoil Mhuire SNS, Blakestown
 2. St. Philips SNS, Clonsilla
 3. Sacred Heart SNS, Huntstown
 4. St. Patrick's SNS, Corduff
 5. St. Ciaran's NS, Hartstown
 6. Scoil Choilm CNS, Luttrellstown
 7. Ladyswell NS, Mulhuddart

Category 3

- Students from other Primary Schools in Dublin 15.

Category 4

- All other applicants.

Category 5

- Late Applications: Students who have applied after the closing date for applications will go on the end of the waiting list in order of the date and time of application.

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

Details of the school's arrangements:

Student's names will be placed in a draw to determine their place on the waiting list. All applications received before the closing date, as outlined above, will be allocated



a number to determine the order in which the available places will be allocated and the order in which the waiting lists are to be determined.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

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

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; other than siblings of a student attending or having attended the school
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school. This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned. This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Blakestown Community School will be based on the following:

- Our school's Admission Policy
- The school's annual Admission Notice (where applicable)

(Please see [Section 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [Section 16](#) 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 they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (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 Blakestown Community School you must indicate:

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

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 Blakestown Community 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 of the school.

- (iii) The parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) An applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [Section 10](#) above.
- (v) The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.
- (vi) An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

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

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

The list may include any (or all) of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of Section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Blakestown Community 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 Blakestown Community 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.

14. Late Applications

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

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- 15.1 Students may transfer to the school subject to the school's admissions policy, available space and suitability.
- 15.2 All applicants looking to transfer into Blakestown Community School must complete Part 1 and Part 2 of the application form for the application to be considered.



- 15.3 The Board will take into account the needs of the relevant year group and class when an application for a transfer is under consideration. (See Section 11)
- 15.4 At the beginning of each academic year the board will determine the number of places available in each year group.
- 15.5 It is desirable that a meeting takes place with the Principal or its designated officer subject to the school receiving full enrolment documentation.
- 15.6 The acceptance of an application for a student transferring from another school will be subject to the additional criteria.
- 15.6.1 The school has not exceeded its capacity
 - 15.6.2 The availability of a place in the particular year
 - 15.6.3 (Delete The availability of a suitable curriculum for the applicant)
- 15.7 Should the school not be in a position to offer option subjects sought by an applicant in a particular year group, the year group shall be considered oversubscribed for the purpose of the application.
- 15.8 Where it is established that a student's behaviour has been a threat to health and safety in or to their previous school(s) community(ies), the Board of Management may decide not to accept such a student in the interest of the health and safety of the general school community.

Admission to particular courses or programmes

- 15.9 Students applying to join the senior cycle will be invited to join the Transition Year or the LCA programme.
- 15.10 Entry to, and the capacity of, the LCA programme in Blakestown Community School will be determined by the Board of Management for each year, in accordance with the school's LCA Policy.
- 15.11 Priority for places in the LCA programme will go to students already enrolled in Blakestown Community School.
- 15.12 Students applying to join 5th year from outside Blakestown Community School are recommended to have completed a Transition Year Programme in another school
- 15.13 Entry into exam years (3rd / 6th Year) will be discouraged under grounds that it is educationally unsound to move in exam years

15.14 Applicants and their parents/guardians must be willing to accept the school's Code of Behaviour and Acceptable Use Policy and confirm this in writing.

15.15 The Board of Management's decisions made with regard to the admission of a student are subject to the right of the parents/guardians to ask for a review or appeal such decisions, using the mechanisms outlined in Section 29 of the Education Act (1998).

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

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

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

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

Blakestown Community School offers religious education in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and in the spirit of the Deed of Trust. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, religious education supports the 'multi-denominational' aspect of our school's ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or non-religious beliefs and those of their peers.

In this context it is important to understand the distinction between 'religious education' and 'religious instruction':

- Religious Education is open to all pupils regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally.



- Religious Instruction is instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a particular religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.

Given that Religious Education, as distinct from Religious Instruction, is timetabled across our school at all levels, the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise.

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 29(C) 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.