

Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan

Admissions Policy

Introduction

School Management is hereby setting out its Enrolment Policy in accordance with the provisions of the *Education Act, 1998, Section 15, 2* so that parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The following personnel will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

Sr. Gerardine Mullen,
Chairperson, Board of Management,
Loreto Secondary School,
Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin.

Mr. Edward Fynes,
Principal,
Loreto Secondary School,
Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin.

Mission Statement

Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan is a Catholic girls' secondary school under the trusteeship of the Loreto Trust Board.

- In the spirit of Mary Ward we aim to develop all the abilities of our students in order that they realise their full potential and use their talents for the service of others.
- We also aim to encourage self-confidence and self esteem in a happy atmosphere and structured environment.
- The school community collaborating together in mutual respect strives for holistic excellence.

Characteristic Spirit and Ethos

The characteristic spirit of Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan is based on Mary Ward's core values of justice, freedom, sincerity, truth and joy. The school's ethos is holistic and person centred. Faith development, recognising God's presence in all things, is at the core of the school's educational philosophy. The school encourages students to use their talents in the service of others and to the greater glory of God. Students are encouraged to strive for excellence at the level of each one's potential in all areas of life and work. The school aims to safeguard and pass on this characteristic spirit. The school's Religious Education Policy is available to all.

The determining influences which define our ethos and characteristic spirit are:

- The school's mission statement
- The Loreto Kolkata Education Guidelines
- The long established urban/rural mix that contributes enormously to school life.

General Information

In the academic year 2010-11, there were 69.99 full time and 2 part time teachers in the school in addition to two counsellors, a learning support teacher, a resource teacher and a school chaplain. The number of teaching staff is linked to student numbers and may consequently vary each year. Students follow a three-year junior cycle and a three-year senior cycle including a compulsory Transition Year.

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Science and is operating within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education & Science. School policy has regard for and is cognisant of resources and funding available from the Department of Education & Science.

Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan follows the curricular programmes 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).

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education & Science regulations and programmes, the rights of Patrons, as set out in the Education Act, and the funding and resources available the school supports the principles of:

- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for the diversity of beliefs, traditions and languages.
- Equality of access and participation in the school.
- Inclusiveness of students with disabilities or special educational needs.

Education Legislation

The school is committed to the implementation of the relevant constitution principles and to the principles which underlie the Education Act, 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Equal Status Acts, 2000-08 and other relevant legislation.

Curriculum and Extra Curricular Provision

Subjects on offer in the academic year 2010-11, at Junior Certificate level are

Core subjects:

Irish, English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Religion, Physical Education, S.P.H.E. and Civic, Social and Political Education.

Option Subjects:

Art, Business Studies, French, German, Home Economics, Music, Science and Technology. Access to option subjects depends on personnel and resources.

Choir is taught to Junior classes subject to resources and available personnel.

Subjects on offer in the academic year 2010-11 at Senior level are:

Core Subjects:

Irish, English, Maths, Religion plus four option subjects:

Physical Education is a core subject in 4th & 5th Year.

Option Subjects:

Accounting, Art, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Economics, French, Geography, German, History, Home Economics; Social & Scientific, Music, Physics, Technology. As at Junior level access to optional subjects depends on personnel and resources.

Transition Year in Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan is compulsory. Transition Year subjects on offer in the academic year, 2010-11, are similar to senior options. Students also take a varying range of modules in areas such as

Substance Abuse, Film Studies, Health & Beauty, Dance, Crime Studies, Road Safety, Drama, Self Defence. Work Experience is an integral part of Transition Year. For full details, please contact the school office for a copy of the booklet *Senior Cycle Options*.

Extra Curricular activities include hockey, basketball, athletics, gaelic football, camogie, soccer and badminton. Musical performances, junior & senior choir, traditional group and orchestra are also available. The school also offers debating, public speaking and social awareness initiatives.

Some extra curricular activities vary from year to year.

School hours are from 9.15 to 4 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday school is from 9.15 to 1.20 for senior students and 9.15 to 3.20 for junior students. Holidays are in line with the standard school year. Details of Parent-Teacher meetings and staff meetings are forwarded in the September of the academic year in question. Each student is required to have a school journal and an attendance scan card. The school requests a voluntary contribution of €175 per student or €250 per family, per year. The monies are used towards the building programme, maintenance and general school resources.

School Management & Representative Associations

The school's Board of Management is appointed by the Loreto Trust Board. The Board manages the school on behalf of the Loreto Trust Board and does so in accordance with the policies determined by the Minister of Education and Science from time to time. The members come from the following constituencies:

Loreto Trust Board:	4 nominees
Parents:	2 elected nominees
Teachers:	2 elected nominees

The members of the Board of Management for the period October 2010 to September 2013 are: Sr. Gerardine Mullen, Mr. Vincent Rattigan, Ms. Kathleen Copeland, Ms. Carole Gallen, Ms. Gillian O'Regan, Mr. Paul Dowling, Ms. Ann Marie McDonough and Ms. Caroline McHugh.

Representative Associations

The Parents' Association represents the parent body and meets regularly with the school Principal.

The Students' Council represents the student body and meets regularly.

Application Procedure

In addition to various procedures and processes associated with admission outlined below the following should be noted.

- Resources, staff levels, facilities and funding available to the school are among the factors that determine the number of places available in any given year..
- Under Department of Education & Science rules secondary school students must be aged 12 years on the 1st January in the calendar year following the student's entry into first year. The school will require an original birth certificate at registration. This will be returned immediately.
- Applications are accepted for girls only

PROCEDURE FOR OFFERING PLACES IN FIRST YEAR

Information Packs:

Information Packs are prepared for parents/guardians interested in sending their daughter to Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan. These packs are available from the school office and are sent to the Principals of the Primary schools listed in Category B below for distribution to the Fifth Class female pupils. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians who wish to apply for a place for their daughter to familiarise themselves with the relevant procedures and deadlines.

Information Evenings:

On Tuesday, 13th September and Wednesday, 14th September 2011 Information Evenings will be held in the school at 7.30 p.m. to provide further information about the operation of Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan. The Application Pack, including the Application Form for entry to First Year in September 2012 will be distributed at these meetings. The Application Pack and Application Form will also be available from the school office during office hours from the 13th September 2011. An advertisement will be placed in the local Fingal Independent Newspaper in early September giving notice of the meeting.

Necessary Information from Applicants

School management requires the following details on the application form:

- Pupil's Name & Address
- Names & Addresses of Parents/Guardians
- E-mail address if available
- Pupil's Date of Birth
- Contact telephone numbers, including mobile contact numbers
- Religion
- Details of any medical condition of which the school should be aware.
- Details of any disabilities or special educational needs
- Previous schools attended by the student

- Relevant information, if applicable, regarding custody, access arrangements and Court Orders pertaining to the student.
- Further information which may be relevant to the school and/or its ethos.

Closing Date for Completed Application Forms:

Completed Application Forms must be returned to the school office not later than **8 p.m. on 21st September 2011**. To facilitate the processing of completed applications and their receipt, the school will be open between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. and between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. on 21st September 2011.

Application Forms received after 8 p.m. on 21st September 2011 will be treated as late applications and placed at the end of the Waiting List (see below).

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the completed Application Form is delivered or posted in time for delivery before 8 p.m. on 21st September 2011. Completed Application Forms posted before this deadline but received after 8 p.m. on 21st September 2011 will be treated as late applications and placed at the end of the Waiting List (see below).

Places for newcomers:

The Board of Management has decided that in 2012 three places will be kept for newcomers to the general area until after St. Patrick's Day, 2012 when they will be allocated by lottery. A newcomer is defined as a female student newly resident in the parish of Balbriggan after the random selection process is completed. If a student has been unable to gain a place in parish primary schools, proof of that situation should be given. If these places are not taken up, they will be offered to students on the Waiting List (see below) in order of position.

Oversubscription:

In the event that the number of Application Forms received exceeds the number of places available the completed Application Forms will be divided into three categories, as follows:

Category A:

Completed Application Forms received in respect of:

- Sisters of students in Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan
- Sisters of past students where past student is defined as a student having in normal circumstances completed their Leaving Certificate in Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan.
- Daughters of eligible staff in Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan where eligible staff is defined as non casual employees of Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan 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.

- Daughters of eligible past staff of Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan where eligible staff is defined as non casual former employees of Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan who have completed a minimum of 5 years employment in the school.
- Daughters of past pupils of Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan where a past pupil is defined as a student who under normal circumstances completed her Leaving Certificate in the school.
- Female students from Balbriggan Parish Primary Schools as listed below:
 - Balbriggan Educate Together N.S.
 - Balbriggan Gaelscoil N.S.
 - Balscadden N. S.,
 - Bracken Educate Together N.S.
 - St. George's N. S.
 - St. Molaga's N. S.
 - St. Oliver's N. S., Balrothery,
 - St. Teresa's N. S.

It should be noted that parents/guardians must indicate on the Application Form if they wish their daughter to be considered in Category A. If false information is given on the application form, the form will be placed at the end of the waiting list.

Category B:

Completed Application Forms received in respect of:

Female students in the following schools:

- Ballyboughal N.S.
- Bellewstown N.S.
- Burrow, Portrane N.S.
- Clonalvy N.S.
- Corduff N.S.
- Donabate/Portrane Educate Together
- Donacarney N.S.
- Garristown N.S.
- Hedgestown N.S.
- Holmpatrick, Skerries N.S.
- Laytown Sacred Heart N.S.
- Le Cheile N.S., Mornington
- Loughshinney N.S., Skerries
- Lusk N.S.
- Lusk/Rush Educate Together N.S.
- Naomh Pdraig G.N.S., Donabate
- Naul N.S.
- Realt na Mara N.S., Skerries
- Realt na Mara N.S., Donacarney

- Rush Gaelscoil
- Rush N.S.
- Scoil Mobhi N.S., Milverton
- Skerries Educate Together
- St. Catherine's N.S. Rush
- St. Patrick's N.S., Skerries
- Stamullen N.S.
- Whitecross N.S.

Category C:

Completed Application Forms received in respect of all other female students.

The Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management, will apply the following criteria in the allocation of places:

All properly completed applications received by the due date in respect of students in Category A will be allocated places before any places can be offered to students in Category B.

The places then remaining of the total will be allocated according to the Selection Process (see below) to students in Category B.

All completed applications received by the due date in respect of students in Category B will be allocated places before any places can be offered to students in Category C.

If places are available for students in Category C, these places will be allocated by Random Selection (see below).

The Selection Process:

In the event that there are more applications received in respect of students in Category B than places available, the number of places to be offered to students in Category B schools will be on a percentage pro-rata basis directly proportional to the number of application forms received from each of the schools in Category B (see example below). It is not possible to guarantee that places will be offered to all schools. 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. Please note that if a sibling is drawn during the random selection her sister(s) is/are automatically granted a place. The place to be created is in addition to the basic allocation of the school in question.

Example of Pro-rata Proportional Basis:

The following sample numbers give an explanation of the method of allocation of places to the schools in Category B:

Total number of application forms received:	257
Comprising: Category A	80
Category B	157
Category C	20
Total number of places:	210
Number of places filled for Category A:	80
Number of places kept for newcomers:	5
Number of remaining places calculated as follows:	
	210 minus 80 = 130
	130 minus 5 = 125
Number of remaining places:	125
Number of applications received Category B	157

Category B				
Schools in Category B	Number of forms received	Percentage of total forms	Applying % to available places	Number of places to be allocated
School 1	40	25.48%	25.48% of 125 = 31.8	32
School 2	30	19.11%	19.11% of 125 = 23.9	24
School 3	25	15.92%	15.92% of 125 = 19.9	20
School 4	20	12.74%	12.74% of 125 = 15.9	16
School 5	15	9.55%	9.55% of 125 = 11.9	12
School 6	10	6.37%	6.27% of 125 = 8.0	8
School 7	8	5.10%	5.10% of 125 = 6.4	6
School 8	5	3.18%	3.18% of 125 = 4.0	4
School 9	4	2.55%	2.55% of 125 = 3.2	3
Totals	157	100%		125

In the above example, had the number of applications received in respect of students attending category B schools been less than 125, then places would have been available for applications received for girls attending Category C schools.

Random Selection Process

The Random Selection Process will take place on 29th September 2011 at 7.30 p.m. in the school hall.

The name of each student entitled to participate in this Selection Process will be placed in a container for each school. The names will be drawn from each container, one by one, until the maximum number of places allotted for each school in Category B is reached. In the example above, 40 names would be placed in the container for School 1 and 32 names would be drawn out.

The order in which the names are drawn from the container will be recorded on a numerical list by the school secretary. Places will be offered in the order in which names are drawn from the container until the available places are filled. An independent commissioner will draw the names, the Principal, two representatives from the Board of Management, a member of the Parents Association and the school's Registration Officer will be present. Parents/Guardians of applicants for September 2012 are welcome to attend.

If the number of applications received from girls in Category B is less than the number of places available, the places will be allocated to girls from Category C using a similar random selection process, i.e., then the name of each student will be placed in a container and places will be offered in the order in which names are drawn from the container until the available places are filled. The remaining names will then be drawn and entered on a numbered Waiting List.

If no places are available for Category C, then the name of each student in Category C will be placed in a container to be drawn and entered at the end of the Waiting List compiled following the drawing of names in Category B.

Random Selection Process for the Waiting List

If there are more applications in Category B than places available in category B, the selection of students on the Waiting List will occur. The remaining names in each Category B container will be placed in one container and drawn at random to establish a single numbered Waiting List.

The name of each student in Category C will then be placed in a container to be drawn and entered at the end of the Waiting List compiled following the drawing of names in Category B.

This numbered Waiting List will be used by the school to offer any places that may become available between the initial offer of places and 1st September 2012. After 1st September 2012 the Waiting List will be cancelled. Should you wish to be considered after this date, please inform the Principal in writing. (See Transfer of Student section.)

Acceptance Form & Deadline Date:

Within 21 days of the Random Selection process each parent/guardian will receive either an Acceptance Form or a letter informing them of their place on the numbered Waiting List. If a

parent/guardian does not receive a communication from the school during this period, they should contact the school office immediately.

The Acceptance Form must be returned to the school office by 4 p.m. on 21st October 2011. Acceptance forms received after this date will be deemed late and the students placed at the end of the Waiting List (see below).

Late Applicants

Late applications for places (other than newcomers) will be placed at the end of the Waiting List in order of the date of receipt of a completed application form.

Code of Behaviour

Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan has a detailed Code of Behaviour which is enclosed in the Application Pack. It outlines the system of rewards and sanctions the school operates to promote a climate which facilitates the teaching and learning that is at the heart of the school's educational mission. Prospective students and their parents/guardians must read and familiarise themselves with the school's Code of Behaviour, which they are required to accept and sign. Prior to registration and admission to the school the parent (or a student who has reached her 18th birthday) shall be required as a condition of such registration and admission to confirm in writing (a) that the Code is acceptable to them (b) that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code of Behaviour.

Suspension and Expulsion.

Under the Education Act 1998, section 15(2)(c), the school's policy relating to the suspension and exclusion of students must be included in the Admissions Policy. This policy is available in the school office.

Transfer of Students from Other Schools

In the case of students seeking to transfer to Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan from another post-primary school or seeking readmission, the following procedures apply:

Parents/guardians who request a place for their daughter(s) in a class in which a place may be available must complete an Application Form. They may be interviewed by the Principal who may be accompanied by the Deputy Principal or a member of the teaching staff. All relevant data – attendance, school reports (as per the Education Welfare Act 2000) concerning the applicant will be sought by the Principal from the Principal of the school which the applicant is attending or has most recently attended.

The reason for the proposed transfer will be discussed with the parents/guardians and the student, as appropriate.

The Principal must be satisfied that transfer to the school shall be on the basis that it would 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 applicant and the likely impact on students already in the school and the operation of the school in general.

The following information, along with an original birth certificate will be required in the case of a student transferring from another school:

1. Student's Name, Age, DOB, Address and birth certificate
2. Parents or Guardian's name/address/telephone no. and mobile telephone no.
3. Emergency contact numbers including work telephone numbers etc.
4. Details of relevant medical conditions of student
5. Details of any disabilities or special education needs of students
6. Religion
7. Previous schools attended by student
8. Reasons for transfer of student if applicable together with information and records from previous/present school
9. Relevant information, if applicable, regarding custody, access arrangements and Court Orders pertaining to the student
10. Further information which may be relevant to the school and/or its ethos
11. Basic school attendance requirements as set down in the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Only applications for girls will be accepted.

A decision about the transfer of the student to this school will be conveyed to the parents/guardians within 21 days of the interview referred to above on condition that all the required data has been received by the Principal.

Students with Special Educational Needs

The school acknowledges the rights of all children to an education, including children who have a disability or other special needs as they relate to education pursuant to the Constitution and the Education Act, 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 and the Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2008. Applications from students with a disability are welcome, provided the school can meet their special educational needs and disabilities; such provision is, however, subject to the limitations imposed by State funding and resources and the school reserves the right to take into account any serious detrimental effect to safety, health and welfare to other students and staff arising from such provision, and/or any serious detrimental effect on the provision of its services to other students or school staff.

Board of Management Right to Refuse Entry

The school 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 additional resources available from the Department of Education & 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 to school property.

Appeals

The Board of Management's decision in relation to any decision is final, subject only to the right of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

An appeal 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.

Review and Ratification

This policy was amended and ratified on 2nd March 2011.

This 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.