Admission Policy of Darley NS

Cootehill,

Co. Cavan

Roll number: 12312L

School Patrons: Mrs. Karen Pepper, Mrs. Stephanie Hobson, Mr. William Deane & Mr. Albert Coleman

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 patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 6th May 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hard copy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and time lines for Darley NS admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website/newsletter at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

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 hard copy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Darley NS is a co-educational primary school with a protestant ethos under the patronage of trustees.

The ethos in the context of this school is based on protestant teaching, tradition and spirituality. This seeks to nurture and encourage the formation of the intellectual, academic, sporting, social and religious abilities of each child within the framework of the community of faith. The ethos encourages intellectual diversity of thought and encourages the individual to seek to understand themselves, the world around them and

the connection between the world and the Divine. This understanding of school ethos promotes pluralism in thought and living, in the context of a Christian school community. Drawing on its protestant tradition, the Darley School encourages home/family involvement, highlighting the importance of the family/home in the social and emotional development of the child, and more broadly, the community of the school and church.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Darley NS shall uphold, and be accountable to the patrons 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.

* As a formal agent of education within the protestant community in the Cootehill area, the Darley N.S. models and transmits a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

* The policies, practices and attitudes of the Darley School are inspired by Gospel values with Christ as the source of those values. It is a community where Gospel values such as honesty, truthfulness, justice, fairness, sensitivity to others, and civic responsibility are nurtured and protected.

* The school is a community where all pupils are equally valued and respected irrespective of gender, social background, family circumstance, educational achievements, physical characteristics or intellectual functioning.

* Pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging, they are treated fairly and their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged, as is their intellectual, social and academic development.

* The work of the school is conducted in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for religious differences. Religious Education occupies a central position in the school curriculum and is regarded as a core subject. The school nurtures freedom of thought and a personal relationship with God. This is most evident in the teaching of Religious Education, and in the prayer life of the school community.

* The Darley N.S. recognises the dignity and value of each person made in the image and likeness of God and as such the school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including her/his relationship with God, with other people and with the environment.

* The principal and teachers aim at making the school a centre of excellence in which high professional standards are maintained and where pupils learn in a safe and happy environment and where teachers are sensitive to the needs and particular circumstances of the pupils.

* A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the Darley School community and pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities.

3. Admission Statement

Darley NS 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.

Darley NS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Special Education Class

Darley NS is a school which has established a class for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Pupils, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students who are deaf or hearing impaired and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the primary category of needs specified.

Darley National School will cooperate with the National Council for Special

Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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.

Darley National School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act."

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

Darley NS with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students who have a primary diagnosis of deafness or hearing impairment and pupils with ASD, who met the criteria under circular 0039/2025.

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

Darley NS is a protestant school and may refuse to admit a student who is not of protestant faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Special Education Class.
The special class for deaf and hearing impaired pupils attached to Darley NS provides an education exclusively for students with hearing impairments and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the primary specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in our special class for autism when the following is provided in support of such an application:
Professional report(s) outlining:

• Diagnosis of special educational needs -Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report
AND
• A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports
AND
• Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same
AND
• A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism or Hearing Impairment, depending on which special class setting is required. This letter of eligibility should be forwarded to the school/s as part of their application for enrolment in a special class or special school.

The requirement for a NCSE letter of eligibility is a prerequisite for enrolment in all types of special classes and special schools for the 2027/2028 school year and must be reflected in schools' admission policies. **A letter of eligibility is applicable for admission for one school year only**, and therefore for example, if a specialist place was not taken up as part of admissions for the 2026/2027 school year, a new letter of eligibility must be sought and obtained for the 2027/2028 school year.

6. Over subscription

In the event that the Darley NS 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 time line for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

Priority Category 1: An applicant student who has a brother or sister already enrolled (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address.)

Priority Category 2: An applicant student who is the child of **or** is under the guardianship of a staff member.

Priority Category 3: An applicant student who is a member of any the protestant churches or is a member of a faith community which has the same/similar religious ethos, to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the school[10] and who lives within the boundary of Cootehill and the surrounding catchment area and / or **has access to the school transport scheme for the school.**

Priority Category 4: An applicant student who is a member of the protestant faith, or is a member of a faith community which has the same/similar religious ethos, to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the school[11] and who lives within the wider community of Cootehill where there is no comparable school available to them.

Priority Category 5: An applicant student who lives within **10km** radius of the school and who complies with the terms of this Policy.

Priority Category 6: All other applicant students who comply with the terms of this Policy.

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:

In respect of Priority categories 3 and 4 above, the applicant must provide the following documentation with the application form in order for the application to be complete, as the school must satisfy itself that the applicant student is a member of a faith community that provides a programme of religious instruction or religious education which is of the same/similar religious ethos to that of the school.

- A statement from the parent/guardian confirming (i) that the applicant student is a member of a faith community and (ii) that the parent/guardian wishes the applicant student to be educated in a school that provides a programme of religious instruction/education which is of the same/similar religious ethos to the religious ethos of the faith community of the applicant student

- **and**

- evidence from the parent/guardian to support the statement that the applicant student is a member of the faith community.

This evidence will consist of:-

• a letter from the relevant religious leader confirming, that the applicant student is a member of the faith community

or

• the signature and stamp of the relevant Church leader on the application form confirming, that the applicant student is a member of the faith community

or

• a baptismal record (if available) issued by the relevant faith community which confirms that the applicant student has been baptised as a member of the faith community.

10 As defined in Section 7(A)(2) of the Equal Status Act

11 As defined in Section 7(A)(2) of the Equal Status Act

It is to be noted that where over subscription occurs in **Priority Category 1**, where the number of sibling applicant students in this category, exceeds the available number of places, the places will be allocated to sibling applicant students using a lottery system (by drawing names out of a hat which will be overseen by the Chairperson of the BOM, the principal and one other independent person). The same lottery procedure will apply to each priority category should oversubscription occur.

Where the applicant students in a category are not successful in achieving a place, their names will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which such names were drawn in the category. Parents/guardians will be informed of the applicant student's place on the waiting list as it applies in the particular priority category.

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,
other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
(I) an early intervention class, or
(II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;

(b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
(other than in relation to a fee charging school or a PLC or further education and training course run by a school in respect of those courses)

(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to:
- admission to (a) a special school or (b) a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned and/or
- admission to an Irish language school, in accordance with the provisions of section 62(9) of the act

(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;
(other than in the case of admission to the residential element of a boarding school or to a PLC or further education and training course run by a school)

(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, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on
(1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or
(2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

(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.

8. Decisions on applications

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

- Our school's admission policy.
- The school's annual admission notice.
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications.

(Please see section 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 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 time line outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in Darley NS, 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 Darley NS, 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 Darley NS 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.

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 over subscription

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 Darley NS 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 Darley NS 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.

Applicant students whose applications are received after the closing date outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

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. Applicant students will be offered a place if a place is available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

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:

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. Applicant students will be offered a place in the relevant class if a place is available. In the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places in the relevant class, the school will apply the selection criteria set out in Section 5 of this policy to those applications. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 12 of this policy.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

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. Applicant students will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

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

This rule applies to <u>all</u> schools.

The board of (name of 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s)/guardians or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

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 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The time line 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) (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 time line 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.

Date ratified by the Board of Management: 30th April 2020

Updated by the Board of Management: 19th December 2022

Revised in line with circular 0039/2025 20th June 2025

Revised in line with circular 0063/2026 18th September 2026

Updated as per section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act on 19th December 2022 and circular 0039/2025 & 0063/2026.

Signature of chairperson: 

Signed on behalf of patrons: _____