

St. Dominic's Secondary School, Ballyfermot.

Enrolment and Admissions Policy.

Introduction:

In presenting its Enrolment and Admissions Policy, the Board of Management of St. Dominic's School is setting out its policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, trusting that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

General Information:

Mission statement

We in St. Dominic's Secondary School aim to provide a Christian education, inspired by the Dominican motto "Truth", which fosters the education of the whole person.

Ethos statement

Our School Ethos aims to:

- Develop a caring community in the school, exercising concern and respect for the welfare of others in an atmosphere of truth, trust and freedom.
- Encourage students in the search for truth, underlined by Christian and Dominican values.
- Develop a curriculum that is flexible, relevant and meaningful, which ensures that all students are challenged to their full potential, academically, socially and spiritually.
- Recognize and accept differences and appreciate every individual's contribution.
- Promote right relationships based on Christian justice, with God, the Earth and all others.
- Encourage educational partnerships with parents and the local community.
- Develop, within all our students, a sense of self-worth and confidence, so that they can make mature and free decisions.
- Encourage students to promote self control in their behavioural management.

Type of School:

- Saint Dominic's is a Voluntary Catholic Post-Primary school for girls, under the Trusteeship of the Irish Dominican Sisters.
- Within the context of
 - The legislation and regulation of the Department of Education and Science
 - The rights of the Trustees as set out in the Education Act (1998)
 - The religious and educational philosophy of the Dominican Sisters, Cabra Congregation.
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 - The school supports the principles of:
 - Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with special needs
 - Equality of access and participation in the school

- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
 - Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and way of life in society.
- St. Dominic's depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science and it operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the Department. Some additional resources are provided from fundraising from other sources. All school policy has regard to the resources and funding available.
 - St. Dominic's follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with section 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998)
 - St. Dominic's is a designated DEIS school, and endeavours to provide equal opportunity for all students

Management:

The school is managed by a Board of Management comprised of 4 Trustee nominees, including the Chairperson, 2 parent members and 2 teacher members. The Principal of the school is Secretary to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management is appointed for a three year period: The current Board members are:

Trustee Nominees:	Sr. Eilís Ní Mhongáin (Chairperson) Ms. Bernadette Murphy; Mr. Thomas Treanor, Claire Cusack
Parent Members:	Mr. Martin Shannon, Ms. Irene Andrews
Teacher Members:	Mr. Joe Breen, Ms. Ashling Griffin
Secretary to the Board:	Ms. Mary Daly

The school has a Parent Association, and any parent wishing to become involved should contact Audrey Connolly, Chairperson, through the school.

Student Council/Student Leadership

Our Student Council is a representative structure for all the students in the school. Each year group elect 2 students to represent them on the Council. It provides students with the opportunity to become involved in the organisation of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents.

Prefects and Mentors provide support for our students. They receive Leadership training on a ongoing basis and they provide pastoral support to our Junior students.

Teaching Resources and Curriculum:

- The total number of teachers in the school is 40, including support teachers for students with special needs, funded by the Department of Education and Science.
- Students are prepared for J.C.S.P., Junior Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, and Traditional Leaving Certificate examinations.
- Transition year is followed by all students.
- The following subjects are currently part of the curriculum in St. Dominic's: Gaeilge, English, Maths, Geography, History, Science, Civic, Social & Political Education, Home Economics, French, Spanish, Social, Personal and Health Education, Business Studies, Art, Religion, Information Technology, Physical Education, Music, Accountancy, Biology, Chemistry.
- In the Transition Year the core subjects taught are Gaeilge, English, Math, Religion, French, Spanish, Social Education, Art, Business, Home Economics, History, Geography, Biology.
There are additional modules in areas such as Public Speaking, Debating, Photography, Leisure, Hairdressing, I.T., Film Studies, Journalism, Personal Development, Radio, First Aid, Leadership Training, E.C.D.L., Young Social Innovators courses and Comenius programme are also offered after school hours.

Pastoral Care:

The following support services are available to all students:

Family Therapy Clinic

The School Care Team

STAY programme – an alternative educational pilot programme.

School Completion Programme

Home School Liaison Service

Suaimhneas “The Four Season Room” for after school activities.

Peer Education with Ballyfermot Youth Services

Career /Counselling Services

National Behaviour Support Service (N.B.S.S.)

Extracurricular activities:

Supervised/Assisted Study	Gael Linn Debates
Gaisce	Chemistry Club
Debating	Green School Committee
Home Work Club	Public Speaking
New Era	Breakfast Club
Musical	Lunch Club
Soccer	Community Development & Leadership
Basketball	Comenius
Hillwalking	Student Council
Drama	Lead with Attitude
Hip Hop	Language Club
Dancing	
Folk Group	
Art Club	

Enrolment of Students with Special Needs:

In relation to applications for the enrolment of students with Special Needs, the Board of Management will request a copy of the student's medical and/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, will request that the student be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the student relative to her special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school can meet the needs to the student as specified in the report. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the DES to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the student outlined in the psychological or medical report. These resources may include for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teachers for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport service or other.

The Board or its representatives will meet with the parents of the student to discuss the student's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held which may include parents, the Principal, the Primary School teacher, learning support teacher, special class teacher, resource teacher, Home/School Liaison teacher or psychologist as appropriate.

It may be necessary for the Board to decide to defer enrolment of a particular student, pending:
The receipt of an assessment report and/or
The provision of appropriate resources by the DES to meet the needs specified in the psychological and/or medical report.

Pupils Transferring

Pupils may transfer to St. Dominic's from other Post-Primary schools subject to school policy, available space and in some cases the approval of the DES. In line with the Education Welfare Act 2000, information concerning school attendance and the student's educational progress will be required to be communicated between the schools.

Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour for St. Dominic's will be appended to the Application Form for Enrolment and must be signed by the parents / guardians prior to enrolment.

St. Dominic's Secondary School, Ballyfermot.

Code of Behaviour

In St. Dominic's, we promote the social, personal, academic, spiritual and physical development of all our students.

The School Journal is the main means of communication between students, teachers and parents. The Journal must be available at all times for use by teachers. Otherwise students will be given a Daily Report Sheet and school work.

- All notes from parents must be written in Journal and should be signed by parents/guardians on a weekly basis.
- All written and oral homework must be recorded in this Journal everyday.
- Replacement Journal may only be obtained from Year Head, at a cost of €10.
- School begins at **8.50 a.m.** every morning and **1.10 p.m.** every afternoon. Students who arrive late for class will be given school work to compensate for loss of class time.
- Students must not leave school without permission from Tutor, Year Head/Deputy Principal or Principal. Permission to leave school must be accompanied by a note and a contact telephone number to confirm authenticity. Those found leaving without permission will receive extra school work.
- Respect must be shown to all Teachers / Staff and Students in class and on the corridors and school grounds.
- Abusive language / Defiance – Suspension
- The possession, use or supply of drugs legal and illegal in the school, on school related activities or on school trips is totally forbidden.
- Smoking is forbidden under the Smoke Free Workplace Policy. The use of cigarettes, lighters, aerosol cans and matches is also forbidden.
- Bullying shall not be tolerated and will be dealt with most severely under our School Policy.
- Permission to use toilet at designated break times only.
- Only small stud earrings are permitted. All facial piercings are not permitted. All other jewellery will be confiscated until the end of term.
- Consumption of Food/Drink is not permitted in the classroom.
- St. Dominic's is a Litter Free zone and all students are expected to co-operate fully in the classroom rota system.
- Mobile phones strictly forbidden – If found in the possession of one, it will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian after 2 days and on any subsequent occasions will be returned after 1 week to a parent/guardian.
- Defacing school property/theft may warrant severe reprimand/legal proceedings.
- Full School Uniform is to be worn at all times, after 3 occasions out of uniform a warning letter will be sent home. Subsequent non wearing of uniform will result in a second letter being sent home arranging a meeting with parents. P.E. Gear must be worn for such classes.
- Runners are totally forbidden.
- Students participating in the book lending scheme are responsible for taking reasonable care of their books and returning them at the end of the year.

Ladder of Referral

Type of Violation	Action By:	Disciplinary Measures
<p><u>Minor Misdemeanour</u></p> <p>No Books No homework Talking Late to class Chewing gum (etc.)</p>	<p>Subject teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written contact • Phone contact • Meeting with parent/Year Head may attend) • Tutor to be informed to act in a pastoral role.
<p><u>Serious Breach of Discipline</u></p> <p>Defiance</p>	<p>Year Head</p>	<p>Meets the student and teacher and decides on punishment</p> <p>Year Head options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet parent • Report Card • Proposed Suspension
<p>Failure to complete 2 Report Cards satisfactorily.</p> <p>Recurrence of above</p>	<p>Deputy Principal</p> <p>Discipline Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Card/ • Proposed Suspension • Meet child and parent • Proposed Suspension • Discipline Report on return to school. <p>Further violation will result in the issue being referred to the Board.</p>
<p><u>Major Breach of Discipline</u></p> <p>Vandalism Stealing Bullying/Drugs</p>	<p>Principal/Deputy Principal</p> <p>Refer to procedures in policy.</p>	<p>Suspension / fine</p>

Suspension

Suspension is a serious sanction and will be imposed by the Principal in cases where all efforts to resolve a disciplinary situation in the Ladder of Referral have failed or where the nature of the incident dictates that a student be removed from the school. The school will require a student to give an undertaking (*oral and written*) that she will behave appropriately if permitted to return to the school from suspension. Parents will be fully informed of their right to appeal to the Board of Management against the suspension. All suspension will be reported to the Board of Management.

In accordance with section 21 Education Welfare Act 2000, where a student is suspended for six days or more, the Principal must report by notice in writing to an educational welfare officer.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the most severe sanction imposed by a school. It will only be imposed for serious breaches of school discipline (*gross misconduct*) or for a consistent and progressive failure to abide by the school Code of Behaviour and values. In accordance with the Deed of Trust the Principal may for a cause, which he/she judges adequate, recommend the expulsion of a student to the Board of Management. The case against the student will be put to the student in the presence of her parents/guardians and they will be given an opportunity to respond. The parents will be informed of the complaint. Parents will be provided with a fair opportunity to challenge the evidence. The parents are informed in writing of the decision, the reasons for it and the right to appeal to the Board of Management by a specified date.

Should it be deemed necessary to speak with a parent/guardian re: your daughter's progress/behaviour, we would appreciate appointments being kept. In the case of suspension, where appointments are not kept or not rescheduled, it should be noted that your daughter should stay at home until such a meeting takes place.

The school accepts no responsibility for loss of items confiscated or items stolen.

Parental Support is expected and appreciated.

I agree that while my/our daughter is a student of St. Dominic's that she will abide by the Code of Behaviour.

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Tutor/Year Head Signature: _____

School Details:

School Name: St. Dominic's Secondary School

Address: Ballyfermot
Dublin 10

Contact details: Telephone: 01 6266493
Fax: 01 6266223
Principal's E-mail: firinne@hotmail.com

Principal: Ms. Mary Daly
Deputy Principal: Mr. Darrell D'Arcy

Guidance Counsellor: M. Clodagh Mc Donagh

Learning Support Teachers: Ms. Sandra Mullen, Ms. Siobhan Connolly,

Year Heads: Ms. Mc Carthy, Ms. O'Donnell, Ms. Morris, Ms. Murphy
Mr. Kinsella, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kelly.

Transition Year Co-ordinator: Ms. D. Hanan

School Secretary: Ms. Michele Cosgrove

Caretaker: Mr. Joe Moore

School Completion Programme
Co-ordinator Sr. Liz Smyth

Family Therapist: Kathleen Fitzsimons

Opening Times: Monday, 8.50 – 3.50, Tuesday – Friday 8.50 – 3.10
Lunch: 12.30 – 1.10 p.m.

The school will make all reasonable efforts to inform parents/guardians of any minor adjustments in the opening/closing times which may occur on occasions.

Application Procedures:

- The school notifies parents/guardians considering sending their daughters to the school through the following means:
 - Visits to local Primary schools
 - Open night
 - Parents' enquiries to school office
- Application Forms are available on request from the school office. The full Admissions Policy is also available on request.
- Applications for enrolment as a first year student in St. Dominic's must be made by parent/guardian on the Application Form provided by the specified date in October of the year prior to the year of entry.(i.e. for entry in Sept. 2008 the closing date is specified date in October 2007.)
- It must be accompanied by the applicant's birth certificate. All applicants must be 12 years of age on the 1st of January of their first year in secondary school.
- Applicants must be willing, with parents/guardians, to accept the school Code of Behaviour. Written confirmation of this will be required.
- When the school receives an application form, properly completed, it will be marked with the date on which it was received.
- Incomplete forms will be returned to parents for completion.
- Any application received after the closing date will not be considered for a place until all the eligible entries have been dealt with.
- Decisions regarding admissions are a matter for the Board of Management. However this task is normally delegated to the Principal who decides on such matters in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy. The Principal may refer any application to the Board for decision.
- As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days after the final date for receipt of completed application forms, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned, and inform the parents of the outcome in writing .
(Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 19 (3))
- In the case of students with special education needs, the Board, having received the relevant information, will make a decision and inform the parents in writing of this decision as per the terms outlined in the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.

As a general principle and insofar as is practicable, student will be enrolled on application. In the event that applications for enrolment exceed or are expected to exceed the number of places available the following criteria for enrolment may be applied:

- Sister(s) of the proposed new entrant already in St. Dominic's
- Ethos considerations
- Parish boundary

Girls attending traditional feeder schools
Daughters of staff members – teaching and ancillary
Daughters of past pupils
Date of application

Provision of information by Parent/Guardian:

The following information will be required for all students being enrolled in St. Dominic's:

- Pupil's Name
- Address
- Date of birth
- Pupils Personal Public Service Number (PPSN)
- Name and address of pupil's parents/guardians
- Contact telephone numbers
- Contact telephone numbers in case of emergency
- Religion
- Nationality
- Previous schools attended, and reasons for transfer if applicable
- Names of older sisters who are/were in the school
- Whether the mother/guardian is a past pupil of the school
- Details of any medical condition which the school should be aware of
- Other relevant information e.g. special learning needs.
- Certificate of exemption from Irish (where applicable)
- Educational Psychologist's Assessment (where applicable)

Appeals:

Should a student's application for admission to the school be refused, the parents/guardians have the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998, Section 29 (d)).

The parents/guardians must be informed in writing of the Board's decision, and the reason why the student was not accepted should be clearly stated.

The parents/guardians right to appeal should be stated, and they must be informed that an appeal should be made in writing on the Application Form supplied.

The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians concerned.

Parents/guardians must inform the school in writing of the decision to appeal.

Application Procedures

Application for enrolment as a first year student in St. Dominic's must be made by parent / guardian on the specified date each year. Applications from parents/guardians wishing to transfer their daughters from other Post-Primary schools may be made to the Principal.

Provision of Key Information by Parents/Guardians:

The following information will be required for all students being enrolled in St. Dominic's:

- ✓ Pupil's name and address
- ✓ Pupil's date of birth
- ✓ Name and addresses of pupil's parents/guardians
- ✓ Contact telephone numbers
- ✓ Contact telephone numbers in case of emergency
- ✓ Details of any medical conditions which the school should be aware of.
- ✓ Religion
- ✓ Previous schools attended if any, and reasons for transfer if applicable
- ✓ Other relevant information e.g. special learning needs.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend every class pertaining to their timetable unless excused by a letter from parents/guardians.

Attendance is monitored using the Dataset monitoring system. All absences are recorded in the student's journal by the parent/guardian, stating the reason for absence. Permission to leave school must be accompanied by a note and a contact telephone number to confirm authenticity.