

Admission Policy of St. Vincent's School



School Address: Lisnagry, Limerick, V94 TK25

School Website: www.stvincentslisnagry.com

Roll number:19200M

School Patron: Bishop of Killaloe

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/guardians of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 25th November 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 St. Vincent's 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.

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

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

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St. Vincent's School is a Catholic co-educational special school catering for children with Moderate GLD with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Killaloe.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (b) including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and

- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith;

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

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

Mission Statement of St. Vincent's School

St. Vincent's School aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils – cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, while supporting the Catholic ethos, all children are accepted and welcomed regardless of religious beliefs. Religion is not a criterion for admission to the school.

St Vincent's School is a designated special school for pupils whose primary disability is a Moderate General Disability. Appendix II of Circular 8/99 and Appendix II of Circular Sp.Ed. 08/02 lay out such criteria as determined by an educational or clinical psychologist. The school operates under the Rules for Primary Schools laid down by the Department of Education and Skills. The school caters for students of primary and post primary ages. It is a co-educational school. St. Vincent's school has only capacity for 100 pupils at this time and the Board of Management has capped enrolment to same.

The school is financed directly by way of capitation and other grants provided by the Department of Education and Skills. School policy has regard to the resources and funding available. The teaching and SNA staffing is determined by the DES through the NCSE. As special schools are under the primary section of the Department, the lengths of the school day and the school year are equivalent to primary school regulations.

3. Admission Statement

St. Vincent' 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.

St. Vincent's School is a school which, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who does not have the category of needs specified

St Vincent's School will co-operate 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.

St. Vincent's 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

St. Vincent's School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students ranging in age from 4 to 18 years that have been diagnosed as having Moderate GLD with a recommendation of a special school placement.

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

St. Vincent's School provides an education exclusively for students with Moderate GLD with a recommendation of a special school setting and may refuse admission to a student, where the student does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this school.

The school will consider applications for places for pupils with Moderate GLD and other disabilities provided that such disabilities are secondary to a primary disability of Moderate General Learning Disability and the school can facilitate the placement in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy. If ambiguity exists as to the exact nature of a prospective pupil's disability, based on unclear reports supplied when enrolment is sought, the school reserves the right to determine whether a pupil qualifies for St. Vincent's School.

Applications for enrolment are made in writing in the period set out in the Admissions Notice. A copy of the enrolment policy will be made available to applicants who cannot access it on the school's website. On receipt of a letter seeking pre-enrolment, applicants will be asked to furnish the following:

1. A completed application form
2. An Educational Psychological Assessment which determines the nature of the prospective pupil's disability, which has been completed within two years of the proposed date of entry to the school.
3. Any additional reports and assessments from the pupil's present school or from other professionals which provide help in determining appropriate provision for the pupil.
4. Permission may be sought to consult with the pupil's previous school and / or any other professional in relation to the pupil.

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:

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:

1. Availability of places at the age of the applicant,
2. Siblings of current pupils
3. Siblings of past pupils
4. Children of school staff
5. Applicants within the catchment area of St. Vincents School in the following order:- (i) in the Lisnagry/Anacotty /Castletroy townlands, (ii) Metropolitan District of Limerick City as defined by the local electoral area,

(iii) all of County Limerick, parts of Counties Clare, Tipperary and Cork; This area is defined by the transport policy of the Department of Education, where the DES provides transport to the most appropriate school nearest to the residential address of the student when the application is made.

6. Applicants outside of this area if 1. a vacancy exists 2. parents have independent means of transport and 3. there is no suitable alternative nearest to the residential address.

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, special school or ASD unit.
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
(Other than in relation to:
 - admission to St. Vincent's special school or insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned and/or
- (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 meetings as a condition of admission; However, given the nature of our school, applicants will be asked to engage with the school to help a smooth transfer for the pupil.
- (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 (2) 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Vincent's School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- 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 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 St. Vincent's 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 St. Vincent's 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.

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 St. Vincent's 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 St. Vincent' School is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications if there are sufficient places at the age of the pupil, after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Applicants 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. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

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:

Applications for enrolment during the school year will be considered subject to school policy, available space and the provision of information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress.

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:

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 St Vincent' 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 St Vincent' 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.

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

The board of St. Vincent's 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

Our school is of a Catholic ethos and, in keeping with that ethos, children of all or no other faith are welcome to apply to this school.

We respect the decision of parents to withdraw their child/children from taking part in the religious education curriculum, religious ceremonies, school Masses, etc.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parents/guardians of 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 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 parents/guardians of 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.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Vincent' School on 25th November 2020

This policy was reviewed by the BOM on the 13/12/22

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management

The contents of this policy have been approved by St. Senan's Education Office, acting on behalf of the Patron.



Appendix 1: Enrolment Procedures for St. Vincent's School

Enrolment Procedures

Pupils must be aged four years on or before 1st September of the year of enrolment.

The enrolment application process is initiated on receipt of a completed 'pre-enrolment' form. This form must be signed by one or both parents or guardians. A copy of this form may be obtained by contacting the school secretary on or after the **1st of March**.

1. A Pre-Enrolment Form provided by the school should be fully completed by the parents/guardians on behalf of the child and returned as soon as possible.
2. This Pre-Enrolment Form should be filled and accompanied with all Supporting Documentation as follows:
 - An original Birth Certificate (and photocopy)
 - Two original documents giving proof of address and dated within the last three months (i.e., telephone bill)
 - A recent psychological assessment or a report from a member of a multi-disciplinary team should be provided. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Social Worker and a Physiotherapist. ("Multi-Disciplinary Team").
 - A Recommendation of Placement in a school setting for children with Moderate General Learning Disability from an Educational Psychologist.

Please Note the Following:

- *Please note all reports in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the principal. Where necessary, contact will be made with the relevant psychologists, therapists or members of the admissions team to clarify any outstanding matters regarding assessments. The withholding of reports from the school Admissions Team may invalidate an Enrolment Application at any time.*
- *There must be a recommendation by a member of the Multi-Disciplinary Team in the report that a special school placement is both necessary and suitable for the child*
- *There must be a diagnosis of a Moderate General Learning Disability by an Educational Psychologist*

3. Once pre-enrolment stage is completed parents of applicants will be invited to a meeting (remotely or onsite) with the principal to go through the Enrolment Process. This meeting is not part of the enrolment process, but gives parents an opportunity to ask any questions about curriculum etc.

4. All Pre-Enrolment Forms must be returned to the school on or before the **1st of April** of the year of proposed enrolment. The principal will review all applications for Enrolments.

5. A list of prospective pupils will be created based on the selection criteria.

6. Within four weeks of closing date of applications, the school will offer available places to prospective students from the list of applicants, who

meet the criteria for enrolment. They will also receive an enrolment form to be completed.

7. Parents/Guardians have 7 days to respond to an offer a place at St. Vincent's School. If they have not responded within this time frame, they forfeit their offer of a place in the school, and it is offered to the next applicant on the applicant list.

Code of Behaviour

All offers of enrolment are subject to acceptance of the School's Code of Behaviour, a copy of which is appended to this policy.

Appendix 2: Pre-Enrolment Form for St. Vincent's School

St. Vincent's School



Roll No: 19200M

Lisnagry, Limerick

V94 TK25

TEL: 061 501403

Email: reception@stvincentslisnagry.com

Website: www.stvincentslisnagry.com

Pre-Enrolment Form – St. Vincent's School 23/24

Please note, a diagnosis from a psychiatrist, psychologist, or a member of a multi-Disciplinary team that has assessed and classified the child as having a Moderate General Learning Disability and a recommendation for a placement in a special school is required for a child's pre-enrolment to be processed.

CURRENT DIAGNOSIS

Moderate General Learning Disability	
Severe & Profound General Disability	
Moderate GLD and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	
Severe & Profound GLD and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	

CHILD INFORMATION

Child's First Name:	Child's Last Name:
Date of Birth:	PPS No:
Gender: Male: <input type="checkbox"/> Female: <input type="checkbox"/>	Nationality:
Name of pre-school/previous school/early intervention services attended (if applicable):	Allergies/Medical conditions:
Language(s) Spoken at home:	Any Other Information:

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Guardian 1 – Name:	Guardian 2 – Name:
Contact Number:	Contact Number:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Address:	

ASSESSMENT REPORTS INCLUDED WITH PRE_ENROLMENT (please tick reports included)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychological Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychiatrist Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physiotherapy Report
<input type="checkbox"/>	Speech and Language Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupational Therapist Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assessment of Need Report
<input type="checkbox"/>	Early Intervention Team Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:		

DOCUMENTATION

Please ensure that all of the following is supplied with the application as otherwise it will not be processed:

- ☐ An original birth certificate (with photocopy)
- ☐ Two proofs of address e.g., utility bill
- ☐ A diagnosis from a psychiatrist, psychologist, or a member of the multi-Disciplinary team that
Has assessed and classified the child as Moderate General Learning Disability and a recommendation for a placement in a special class
- ☐ Any other relevant reports – speech & language/occupational therapy and psychological reports

I understand that:

- The receipt of a pre-enrolment form does not guarantee that the child will be offered a place
- It is my responsibility to inform the school if any change of contact details or other relevant circumstances
- If I have not replied to a confirmed offer of a place within 7 days of that offer being made, I will have forfeited my child's place on the enrolment list

Signature:	Date:
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Please send the completed application form to:

Admissions Team
St. Vincent's School,
Lisnagry,
Limerick, V94TK25

For St. Vincent's School use only		Ref:
Receipt of Form Date:	Original Birth Cert	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age:.....	Proof of Address x2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Area.....	Reports/Recommendations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter of Offer sent date:.....	Accepted: <input type="checkbox"/>	Declined: <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:.....		