**Admission Policy (September 2023)**

**Contents:**

**Section A:**

1. Introduction

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

3. Admission statement

4. (Tighín Odhran) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) class details including Admission policy.

5. Admission of Students

6. Oversubscription

7. What will not be taken into account

8. Decisions on applications

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

10. Acceptance of an offer by an applicant

11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

12. Sharing data with other schools

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

14. Late applications

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

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

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

18. Reviews/Appeals

**Admission Policy of St Dominic’s College**

**Ratoath Rd**

**Ashtown**

**Dublin 7.**

**Roll number: 60731F**

**Please note, parent refers to parent/guardian in this policy.**

**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. 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 Dominic’s College 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**

Background information:

St. Dominic’s College is an all-girls voluntary secondary school in the tradition of the Dominican sisters with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Le Chéile Schools Trust. The school is governed by the Board of Management which is made up of Representatives from senior management, teaching staff, parents, Le Chéile Schools Trust and the Dominican Sisters.

MISSION STATEMENT

At St. Dominic's College, we are committed to enabling each and every student to develop their potential, both in the academic and non-academic fields. We encourage the development of a healthy self-image, whilst teaching the student to respect the backgrounds, traditions and beliefs of all those with whom they come into contact. We provide an environment in which the student is encouraged to take responsibility for her own work, whilst participating in school activities as part of the community.

Characteristic Spirit and Ethos:

The purpose of our Le Chéile / Dominican school is to provide an education that acknowledges and affirms the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God - “The glory of God is humanity fully alive” (St Irenaeus). It embraces the intellectual, physical, cultural, emotional, social, moral and spiritual growth of each student.

Our school seeks to build a learning community that welcomes, and witnesses to, the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the Le Chéile Charter. The school draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past and the charism of the founder St. Dominic of the Dominican Order who began this school.

Our school is committed to creating a place of inclusivity, equality and openness, where people can live with and be taught by one another, however diverse our experiences might be. It does not discriminate on religious grounds and is open to students from diverse backgrounds. It offers educational opportunities which promote excellence so that students can respond responsibly to their own lives, the lives of others and the earth, which is our home.

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is central to our curriculum. Alongside Religious Education the school supports students in their Catholic religious formation. All students’ spiritual growth is enhanced through areas such as nature, art, poetry and music. The spiritual life of students can also be deepened through prayer and ritual.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Dominic’s College, Cabra 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

The general objectives of all Le Chéile schools include:

* Welcome recognises the unique dignity and worth of each person.
* Wisdom is the pursuit of a greater understanding and appreciation of the world.
* Witness comes from the expression of Gospel values, in everyday life, and recognises that every person is made in the image and likeness of God.

At St. Dominic's College, we are committed to enabling each and every student to develop their potential, both in the academic and non-academic fields. We encourage the development of a healthy self-image, whilst teaching the student to respect the backgrounds, traditions and beliefs of all those with whom they come into contact. We provide an environment in which the student is encouraged to take responsibility for her own work, whilst participating in school activities as part of the community.

CREST and MOTTO:

Our College crest or shield is divided into 8 gryons, meeting at the centre. It is black and white, the armourial colours of the Guzman family. Guzman was the family name of St.Dominic. Added to this shield is the white and black cross, worn by the Knights of Calatrava.

St. Dominic’s mother was of this family. The ‘flowering of the Cross’ represents the lily, symbolic of purity. Above the shield there is a star, placed in memory of the brilliant star seen shining on St. Dominic’s forehead at his Baptism.

The complete shield signifies that the Dominican Order has been founded for the defence of the Church.

The school’s motto is “Veritas” because a Dominican’s greatest work is to preach the Truth of God.

Parents Association:

St. Dominics College recognises that parents are the primary educators. Working in partnership with them to develop their interest, trust and constructive involvement in the aims of the school is essential. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a structure provided to ensure opportunities for active participation in the continuous development of the school

**3.** **Admission Statement**

St. Dominic’s College 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.

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| **Single gender schools**  St. Dominic’s College, Cabra is an all-girls school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school.  **Post-primary denominational schools**  St. Dominic’s College, Cabra is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of Catholic belief in preference to others.  **All denominational schools**  St. Dominic’s College, Cabra is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school. |

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

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| St. Dominic’s College, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a “special class” to provide an education exclusively for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).  **Tighín Odhran**  St. Dominic’s College currently has two classes catering for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with a maximum capacity of twelve students. The ASD class (Tighín Odhran) named in honour of the contributions made to the school community by Sr. Odran Flavian. Tighín is the Irish word for “little house”, combined with the immense care and passion for education epitomised by Sr. Odhran, the chosen name embodies the little house of warmth, growth and the shared value that every child can reach their full potential with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills.  It provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.  **Admissions Policy to Tighín Odhran is attached as Appendix A to this Policy** |

**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(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

Eligibility for Admission

1. Sisters of students currently in St. Dominic’s College.
2. Pupils from St. Catherine’s, Mary Help of Christians, Christ the King schools.
3. Pupils from other feeder primary schools
4. Sisters of past pupils.
5. Daughters of current staff, ‘current’ -defined as staff working in the school for at least one full academic year on the year the place is being offered.
6. Daughters of past pupils to a maximum of 25% of intake.
7. Children who have reached the age of 12 years on the 1st January of the school year in which they will be due to enter the school and as a rule, the completion of a full course of primary education.

Procedures for Admission

* The school will normally organise an ’Open Night’ and prepare a School Prospectus so that parents may inform themselves about the school. The Information Evening/Open Day is open to all eligible students for enrolment and the parents.
* For students whose primary school is within the Cabra area, application is made by the completion of the application form. The Principal of each primary school within the Cabra area will distribute these forms to 6th class students.
* Students of 6th class, attending St. Catherine’s, Mary Help of Christian’s and Christ the King School will make direct application to St Dominics College as per the dates specified in the Admissions policy. Applications must be on or before the specified date.
* Applications are processed and parents, whose children meet the admission criteria, will be required to formally accept a place in the school by a date specified on the letter of notice.
* Students whose parents are resident in the parish, but attending Primary schools outside, should make direct application to the school as per dates in the admissions policy. The official application form and School Admissions Policy is available from the school office. Such applications will not be processed until students in Section 1 and 2 above have been accommodated.
* Late applications for 1st year, from students meeting the admission criteria, will be considered, depending on the availability of places at the time of application. Such applications should be made directly to the school.
* Parents should complete, sign and date the application form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents.
* Parents may (at a later date) be required to complete a further information form regarding their child's educational progress and/or to co-operate with the school's attempts to identify the educational or other relevant needs of the child. The school may wish to meet with the applicant and her/his parent(s), to discuss the needs of the individual applicant or the parent(s), may request such a meeting.
* Failure to complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant documentation requested by the school or failure to make a reasonable arrangement to meet with the school authority to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

**Decision Making Process:**

* Decisions regarding student admissions are a matter for the Board of Management. However, this task is delegated to the Principal who is informed and decides on such matters in accordance with the school's official admissions policy. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after the closing date for receipt of such applications.

All decisions on application for admission to St. Dominic’s College will be based on the following

o School’s Admission Policy

o School’s Annual Admission Notice

* The Board of Management decides the maximum number of places offered for admission each academic year. That figure will depend on the overall number of students in the school, the overall capacity for which the school was designed, the capacity of the school to fulfil its obligations under educational programmes currently in progress, the approved teaching resources and the class size limitations that are predetermined. Information on class sizes is available from the principal on request. The assignment of a student to a class is a matter for the school principal alone.
* **Assessment:** Assessment of incoming students takes place, at a date, which is notified to parents/guardians of children accepted for admission to the St. Dominic’s College. All applicants will be expected to sit the school's Assessment test.

Students with Special Education Needs

* The St. Dominic’s College strives to create an inclusive environment for all students, including those with additional needs. The school’s ability to provide for students with special education needs is restricted to the resources made available to do so from the Department of Education & Skills. Applicants with Special Education Needs must meet the entry criteria set out for all students in this policy. The regular admissions procedures must also be adhered to. The existence of special education needs does not give an applicant a prioritised entry entitlement. The school's Special Needs Policy sets out how the school will ·
  + Take steps at an early stage to identify those children that enrolled at the school with special needs within the terms of the School Admissions Policy, and to become familiar with their particular educational needs.
  + Request a copy of the child's medical/psychological report/individual educational plan, if available.
  + Request assessment in order to assist the school in establishing educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.
  + Request, in a timely manner, from the Department of Education and Science any additional resources deemed necessary e.g. Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport etc.
  + Meet the parents/guardians to discuss the child's needs, the special staffing or equipment resources received by the school from the Department of Education and Science, to assist that child achieve their potential and the school's actual capacity to meet the child's needs.
  + Do all it possibly can to identify, plan, and provide for the needs of a child with special needs who is accepted as a student at the school under the terms of the admissions policy.
  + Liaise and dialogue with the SENO and NCSE to clarify on the resources for an individual student with SEN.

**Right of Appeal:**

Where a student is refused admission/enrolment to the school their parents will be advised of their right to appeal that decision to the Board of Management and then to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills per the terms of DES Circular letter No. M48/01, if necessary.

**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:

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| 1. Applicants who are siblings of existing students 2. Applicants living in the primary catchment area and attending one of the listed primary schools 3. Applicants living in primary catchment area and not attending one of the listed primary schools 4. Applicants not living in primary catchment area and attending one of the listed primary schools 5. Places to be filled based on a Lottery |

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:

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| 1. Place will be decided by lottery |

**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:

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| (a) a student’s prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,  (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;  (other than in relation to a fee for a plc or further education and training course run by St. Dominic’s College in respect of those courses)  (c) a student’s academic ability, skills or aptitude;  other than in relation to:  admission to Tighín Odhran insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned  (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student’s parents;  (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;  (f) a student’s connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;  (See section 5)  (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. Dominic’s College will be based on the following:

· The 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 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 16 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

**9.** **Notifying applicants of decisions**

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student’s ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student’s place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school’s decision (see section 18 below for further details).

**10.**  **Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Dominic’s College 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. Dominic’s College 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:

(a) An application for admission to the school has been received

(b) An offer of admission to the school has been made or

(c) An offer of admission to the school has been accepted

The list may include any or all of the following:

(a) The date on which an application for admission was received by the school

(b) The date on which an offer of admission was made by the school

(c) The date on which an offer of admission was accepted by the applicant

(d) An applicant’s personal details including 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. Dominic’s College 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. Dominic’s College is in the order of priority assigned to the students’ applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

**14.** **Late Applications**

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

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| **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 * after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows   are as follows:  Admission of students transferring from another school  All such applications will be considered on an individual basis, subject to the availability of a place at the time of application. Application Forms are available from the school office on request. Applicants must fully complete this. Adherence to this Admissions Policy must be accepted.  Prior to enrolment applicants will be asked to   * Furnish full details of previous education details * Provide copies of two most recent school reports * Provide copies of state exam results * Provide reference from previous school * Provide, where applicable, a current education psychological report   Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation listed above or to supply any other relevant documentation requested by the school may result in an applicant being refused admission to the school.  Applications will be accepted from students who meet the criteria of the department of Education and Skills and the school, a place is available, subject choice and class size are appropriate, and it is to the educational benefit of the student.  Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of ongoing disciplinary hearings in another school, which includes any ongoing statutory appeals procedures in accordance with The Education Act 1998 or The Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004.  The school reserves the right to refuse an application in circumstances, which might include but not exclusively confined to the following   * An established prior record of disruptive behaviour * The application is not conducive to the spirit or culture of the school |

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

The Board of Management of St. Dominic’s College 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**

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| The following are the school’s arrangements for students, where the parent~~s~~ 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:  *Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction*, where the school offers Religious Education as distinct from Religious Instruction.  St. Dominic’s College offers *religious education* in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and in the spirit of the Deed of Trust. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, *religious education* supports the ‘multi-denominational’ aspect of our school’s ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or non-religious beliefs and those of their peers.  In this context it is important to understand the distinction between ‘r*eligious education’* and *‘religious instruction’*:   * *Religious education* is open to all pupils regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally. * *Religious instruction* is instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a particular religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.   Given that Religious Education, as distinct from Religious Instruction, is timetabled across our school at all levels the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise. |

**18.** **Reviews/appeals**

**Review of decisions by the Board of Management**

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 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 parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

**Section B:**

**Appendix A**

**Admission Policy to Tighín Odhran**

This policy must be read in conjunction with and is part of the overall Admission Policy for St. Dominic’s College. The aim of St. Dominic’s College is to offer a positive meaningful educational experience to the student that allows them to develop to their full learning potential, in an environment that offers clarity, predictability and calm. After a period of time observing, assessing and interacting with the student, an Individual Education Plan will be developed following consultation with Parents/Guardians and with other relevant professional staff (e.g. NEPS Psychologist, Coordinator/Teacher(s) of Special Educational Needs/ASD, Occupational Therapist, School Principal/Deputy Principal etc), as deemed appropriate.

The aim of Tighín Odhran is to offer a specific learning environment with a mainstream post-primary school. This setting facilitates optimum inclusion as part of the school community with access to mainstream educational activities that are available and that are deemed appropriate to the ongoing education of the student.

**External Support Services**

Essential services are provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE). These services include Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy. The Board of Management at St. Dominics College has no function in accessing these services, but merely acts as a relevant conduit for their provision, where available and possible. Furthermore, St. Dominics College cannot guarantee any additional service or support that may be available to the student through the offices of the HSE. St. Dominics College does not have the resources to follow up on these services and it is a matter for the parents alone to ensure that all such possible support services are being accessed and availed of.

**Pre enrolment**

All applicants must have an assessed primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The assessment must be in line with the established DES criteria of DSM-V and ICD 10. All applications must be accompanied by an assessment, carried out by an Educational/Clinical Psychologist approved by the DES, recommending the applicant as suitable.

A prospective student for the ASD Special Class must have a professional recommendation, from a NEPS Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, Educational Psychologist, Psychiatrist, or from a multidisciplinary team (Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Social Worker, and/or Physiotherapist), for placement in an autism specific class, (formally known as an ASD Unit). All applications in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team/Board of Management. The withholding of such reports from the Board of Management may invalidate an enrolment application at any time.

Parents should note that under the official DES guidelines, the number of student places available in Tighín Odhran is six students. It should be noted that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily guarantee the student a place in the ASD Special Class.

The Board of Management requires that Parents must accept that the enrolment process only proceeds where the educational and physical needs of the applicants as identified can be met within the ASD Unit.

The Parents of the applicant must accept and agree to the St. Dominics College Code of Positive behaviour and the terms of this policy.

The ASD Special Class at St. Dominics College will only cater for children that are 12 years or more, and less than 18 years of age, on the 1st of September of the school year in question.

**Enrolment**

All applications for enrolment in the ASD Special Class will be considered within the context of the school's Admission Policy. Where the number of applicants exceeds the places available, priority will be given in the following order:

* Current students enrolled in St. Dominics College.
* Siblings of current students in St. Dominics College who apply.
* Applicants resident within the defined school Catchment Area (see General Students Admission Policy) and be attending

(1) attending the local feeder National Schools - St. Catherine’s, Mary Help of Christians and Christ the king School

(2) applicants not attending the above named feeder schools but for whom Tighín Odhran would be nearest to their home residence.

Parents should note that where the number of applicants at any stage of the criteria numbered above exceeds the number of spaces available within that criterion, then the date of birth of the applicant will be considered with priority being given to the oldest applicant and continuing thus forth until all places are filled. If two or more applicants share the same date of birth, then places will be allocated by lottery.

**Application Process**

An Enrolment Application Form, a copy of which is available from the school, should be fully completed and submitted by the parent on behalf of the applicant. The closing date for receipt of such completed applications by the school is published in the Annual Admission Notice for the relevant year.

This Enrolment Application Form should be accompanied by an Original Birth Certificate of the applicant and accompanied by all the up to date and pertinent educational psychological assessments(s) and diagnostic report(s). The Enrolment Application form must also be accompanied by School Reports and relative documented information from all previous schools that the applicant attended. Proof of address is necessary.

Only applications that meet the criteria for enrolment, subject to available space and maximum student numbers, will be considered. A meeting with parents/guardians and the student applying will take place.

Students that are currently enrolled in an ASD Special Class in another post-primary school will not be considered for transfer during the course of the school academic year.

Students enrolled in a ASD Special Class in another post-primary school will not be considered for transfer at the end of a school academic year unless the family have moved residence into the catchment area of St. Dominics College.

The advice, support and recommendation of the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) for the area/region, based on the needs of the applicants, will be considered in the decision making process associated with enrolment of applicants in Tighín Odhran.

It is important that Parents/Guardians note that St. Dominics College may in certain clarified circumstances and following an assessment and investigation, be unable to meet the special educational or physical needs of the applicant on the grounds that

(I) the applicant is deemed a risk, on health, safety, welfare or security grounds to themselves and/or other, or

(II) admission of the applicant will make impossible, or have a serious detrimental effect on, the education provision by St. Dominics College as an educational establishment of its services to others.

The Board of Management will make the final decision on all applications to enrol.

On acceptance of a place

* The parents of a child being offered a place in Tighín Odhran will be invited to visit the school to meet with a member of the Special Education Team and the Principal/Deputy Principal(s) of the school, to discuss the placement/enrolment of their child. Any information requested by the parent will be provided at this meeting.
* The parents may be requested to consent to a visit by a member of the Special Educational Needs professional staff at St. Dominics College, to visit the existing school placement of the student concerned in order to observe the student in a classroom situation.
* The parents will be invited to accompany their child to visit St. Dominics College Tighín Odhran Class and meet staff.
* The parents may be consulted about the Education Plan for their child.
* The NEPS psychologist and SENO will be appraised of the Education Plan
* A child may be phased gradually into the special class in the ASD Unit through a mutually agreed process between parents and the management of the school.
* Where it is deemed appropriate, a student in the ASD Special Class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes by school management.

The placement of every student within Tighín Odhran will be subject to regular review, by school management, staff and where appropriate the professional services external to the school. Decisions will follow

* continue within the ASD Special Class at the St. Dominic's College.
* integrate fully into the mainstream post-primary.
* seek an alternative and more appropriate educational placement for the student as St. Dominics College is unable to meet the educational needs of the student.

In such an instance the support and assistance of the staff at St. Dominics College will be available to assist the family in securing a more suitable learning environment in another educational institution, for the student concerned.

**Code of Positive Behaviour**

As already indicated above the parents of the applicant for enrolment must accept and agree to the St. Dominics College Code of Behaviour/Discipline and the terms of this policy.

Children with special educational needs may display difficult, defiant or oppositional behaviours. All efforts will be made by staff at the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the student's Individual Educational Plan (IPA). All students including those with special educational needs are subject to the school Code of Behaviour/Discipline and the terms of the Health and Safety Statement adopted by the Board of Management at the school. Where any student's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other students in the ASD Special Class or the students in a mainstream class, to an extent that their constitutional right to an education is being interfered with, as judged by the Board of Management of the school, then the school reserves the right to advise parents that a more suitable educational setting should be found for their child.

The Board of Management at St. Dominics College reserves the right of admission and to refuse to enrol a student, within the terms of this policy. Parents/Guardians of applicants who are refused admission to St. Dominics College will be advised of their right to appeal the matter to the Secretary General, DES under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.