

ADMISSIONS POLICY

2025 - 2028



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1. Introduction

St Vincent de Paul Senior School is a Catholic primary school in the parish of Marino under the Patronage of Archbishop Dermot Farrell. The school prides itself on being an inclusive, welcoming community dedicated to promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of our pupils: social; intellectual; physical; cultural; moral and spiritual. We are committed to diversity and inclusion, while at the same time protecting the characteristic Catholic ethos of our schools.

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 has consulted with school staff, the School Patron, and with parents of children attending the school. The reconfiguration of the Catholic primary schools in the parish of Marino has emerged as a result of consultation with all stakeholders in the school communities. The Admissions Policy will operate for the period of transition, covering the enrolment cycles of September 2025, September 2026 and September 2027.

The policy was approved by the School Patron on September 14th 2024. It is published on the school website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for the 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 Joint Application Forms for admission are published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request.

2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of the Schools

St Vincent de Paul Senior School is a primary school with a Catholic ethos under the Patronage of Archbishop Dermot Farrell, the Archbishop of Dublin.

“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 pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; 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,

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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 de Paul Senior School shall uphold, and be accountable to the Patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of each of the schools 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

St Vincent de Paul Senior School operates under the rules and guidelines of the Department of Education & Skills and follows the Curriculum as prescribed by the Department of Education & Skills. We seek to provide a sound academic education, whilst developing the moral, emotional, spiritual, aesthetic and creative faculties of each pupil. We aim to develop and promote human and Christian values within the context of a Catholic community. We acknowledge the individuality of each pupil and we aim to nurture self-esteem, self-confidence and a positive self-image. Our school promotes co-operation and a strong sense of community so that all children experience acceptance. Every effort is made to allow children the opportunity to express their individuality so that each child experiences success and satisfaction in what they do. We promote an atmosphere of openness and friendliness, encouraging all pupils to respect themselves, others and their property.

Common Admissions Procedures

St Vincent de Paul Senior School, St Vincent de Paul Junior School, and Scoil Mhuire will operate common admissions procedures from September 2025. While each school has its own Admissions Policy, these policies should be read and understood in conjunction with each other. These **common admissions procedures** seek to accommodate parental preference, while also enabling the school communities to safeguard against unnecessary competition between the schools.

The respective Boards of Management have nominated two representatives from St Vincent de Paul Senior School, St Vincent de Paul Junior School, and Scoil Mhuire to form an Admissions Committee which will meet in October each year. This Admissions Committee will assume an administrative role in overseeing the implementation of this policy and will determine the intake numbers to be published on each school's respective Annual Admissions Notice. Intake numbers are determined by the pupil – teacher ratio recommended by the Department of Education, where practicable.

When applying for a primary school place in the parish of Marino, a Joint Application Form will be completed. All applications are then reviewed by the Admissions Committee. Please see *General Guidelines for Enrolment* for further information.

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3. Admission Statement

St Vincent de Paul Senior School will not discriminate in the admission of a pupil to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned has additional 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).

During the transition period – which will last until June 2028 – St Vincent de Paul Senior School will have some year groups that are single-sex (all-girls). St Vincent de Paul Senior School does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to an existing single-sex year group.

St Vincent de Paul Senior School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where they refuse to admit as a pupil a person who is not a Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St Vincent de Paul Senior School will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act* (2004) in relation 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. The school will comply with any direction served on its Board or the Patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

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4. Categories of Additional Educational Need Catered for

St Vincent de Paul Senior School is fully committed to inclusion, particularly with reference to the enrolment of pupils with additional educational needs. In this school, pupils with additional educational needs will be supported in mainstream classes in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) to the Boards of Management. In accordance with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy, we will strive to ensure that the appropriate resources and supports are put in place to meet the educational, social, and personal development needs of our mainstream pupils.

Where pupils transfer from St Vincent de Paul Senior School to attend an alternative education setting (for example, a reading class) for a time-bound period, they will be readmitted. Families must provide the school with a copy of the pupil's psycho-educational assessments and reports from their previous school(s) so that necessary resources for providing for their needs may be put in place.

5. Admission of Pupils

St Vincent de Paul Senior School shall admit each pupil seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (Please see Section 6 for further details)
- b) a parent of a pupil, 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 them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the pupil.

St Vincent de Paul Senior School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a pupil a person who is not a Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

During the transition period, St Vincent de Paul Senior School will have some year groups which provide education exclusively for girls, and may refuse to admit as a pupil a person who is not of the gender provided for by the particular school.

General Guidelines for Enrolment

The Boards of Management are bound by the Department of Education and Skills *Rules for National Schools* (1965) and the *Education (Welfare) Act* (2000).

When determining the number of school places being made available in a given year, the Boards will have regard to relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines.

Pupils in St Vincent de Paul Senior School are required to cooperate with and support the school's **Code of Behaviour** as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation, and management matters. The Board places responsibility on the pupil's Parent or Guardian for

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ensuring that their child(ren) cooperate with said policies in an age-appropriate way. Parents/Guardians in the school will be required to sign and return a form stating that they have read and agree to support the school's **Code of Behaviour**. Sanctions may be applied for failure to comply. These policies may be added to and revised from time to time.

From September 2025 until September 2027 (inclusive) both St Vincent de Paul Senior School and transition

will continue to receive Second Class pupils from St Vincent de Paul Junior School. The relevant dates and timelines for the admission process to Second Class in the parish of Marino are set out in the Annual Admissions Notices of St Vincent de Paul Senior School and Scoil Mhuire, which are published annually on the websites of both schools at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned. All decisions in relation to application for enrolment are made by the **Admissions Committee** in accordance with the schools' policies.

From September 2028, the status of the three primary schools in the parish of Marino will be as follows:

- St Vincent de Paul Junior School will cater for pupils from Junior Infants to Second Class, covering stages one and two of their primary education. Pupils of St Vincent de Paul Junior School will be prioritised for admission to St Vincent de Paul Senior School.
- St Vincent de Paul Senior School will cater for pupils from Third to Sixth Class, covering stages three and four of their primary education.
- Scoil Mhuire will cease receiving pupils from St Vincent de Paul Junior School, and will be a fully vertical school catering for pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.
- The common admissions procedures outlined in this policy will be reviewed in 2027, with a view to reflecting this changed status and will cover all incoming Junior Infant pupils.

The Board of Management of St Vincent de Paul Senior School wishes to emphasise that **any false or misleading information provided in the admissions process may lead to forfeiture of a child's place.**

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Enrolment Procedure for Second Class 2025 – 2028

The common admissions procedures outlined in this Admissions Policy will be operated to **ensure an overall balance of pupils** attending both St Vincent de Paul Senior School and Scoil Mhuire. These procedures take into consideration parental preference while also ensuring that all children currently enrolled in Catholic education in the parish of Marino will transition to either St Vincent de Paul Senior School or Scoil Mhuire. Each year the Admissions Committee determines the numbers for entry to Second Class based on:

- a) The size of, and available space in, classrooms
- b) Department of Education and Skills guidelines
- c) Multi-grade classes

Each year, allocation to either St Vincent de Paul Senior School or Scoil Mhuire will be determined in accordance with the intake numbers published on each school's Annual Admissions Notice, taking into consideration parental preference and an overall balance/proportionality within the cohort.

One of the core philosophies underpinning these common admissions procedures is that families should be educated together, therefore the following fundamental principle will apply: In so far as is possible, **siblings will be educated in the same school** where this is the preference of the family. This will take effect from September 2025, whereby all subsequent siblings will be prioritised for admission to the school of their older sibling.

While families will be enabled to state a preferred option for placement in either school, the decision of the Admissions Committee regarding the placement of pupils in either St Vincent de Paul Senior School or Scoil Mhuire is final.

6. Oversubscription

In the event that the number of applications for places exceeds the total number of places available in Second Class in St Vincent de Paul Senior School and Scoil Mhuire, the Admissions Committee will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria for the allocation of places in the order listed below to those applications that are received **within the timeline for receipt of applications** as set out in the Annual Admissions Notice:

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- Category One:** Pupils transferring from First Class in St Vincent de Paul Junior School who have an older sibling or step-sibling currently enrolled in St Vincent de Paul Senior School.
- Category Two:** Pupils transferring from First Class in St Vincent de Paul Junior School.
- Category Three:** Children residing within the geographical boundaries of Marino Parish as of the enrolment dates.
- Category Four:** Children of current members of staff in St Vincent de Paul Junior School, St Vincent de Paul Senior School, and Scoil Mhuire.
- Category Five** Children residing outside the parish of Marino.

In the event that there are two or more pupils 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:

- **older children will be given priority.**
- the names of all applicants who are not allocated a place will be placed on a common waiting list in the order determined by the criteria set out above. Any additional places that become available prior to the commencement of the relevant school year will be allocated from this waiting list.

St Vincent de Paul Senior School 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 pupil a person who is not Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the schools.

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 pupil on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- a) a pupil'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;
- c) a pupil's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a pupil's parents;
- e) a requirement that a pupil, or their parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;

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- f) a pupil'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 an applicant who has a sibling currently in 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. This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists.

8. Decisions on Applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St Vincent de Paul Senior School will be made by the Admissions Committee based on the following:

- This Admissions Policy
- The school's Annual Admissions Notice
- The common admissions procedures – operated with St Vincent de Paul Junior School and Scoil Mhuire – outlined in this policy
- The information provided by the applicant on the schools' Joint Application Form received during the period specified in the Annual Admission Notice for receiving applications.

Selection criteria that are not included in our Admission Policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in this school. Please see Section 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and applications for places in years other than the intake group.

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 pupil is not offered a place in any of the schools in the parish of Marino, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the pupil's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the pupil'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).

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10. Acceptance of an Offer of a Place by an Applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from St Vincent de Paul Senior 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 de Paul Senior 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 pupil, 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 them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the pupil; 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 pupils. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another Board of Management with a list of the pupils 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;

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- iii. the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- iv. a pupil's personal details including their 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 pupils whose applications for admission to primary school in the parish of Marino were unsuccessful due to the schools 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 these schools is in the order of priority assigned to the pupils' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this Admissions Policy.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice, will be placed at the end of the common 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 pupils on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the pupils have been placed on the list.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the Annual Admissions 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 common waiting list as set out in Section 13.

15. Procedures for Admission of Pupils during the School Year

The Boards of Management of St Vincent de Paul Senior School, St Vincent de Paul Junior School, and Scoil Mhuire reserve the right to determine the maximum number of children in each classroom bearing in mind:

- The size of, and available space, in classrooms
- The educational needs of children of a particular age
- Multi-grade classes
- DES maximum class average directives

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Applications for places for pupils from Second Class to Sixth Class will be accepted provided there is a vacancy in the relevant year group. Where pupils seek to transfer to primary school in the parish of Marino from another primary school, the Admissions Committee will request the following:

- Relevant information from the pupil's current or former school.
- Information and documentation on any additional educational or behavioural needs.
- The pupil's birth certificate
- Satisfactory proof of main family residence (for example, a signed lease or a utility bill issued within the last three months to that address)

False or misleading declarations and /or withholding of relevant information will invalidate an enrolment application.

Pupils from **Second Class to Sixth Class** who are seeking a school place in the parish of Marino will be required to complete a Joint Application Form which can be returned to the office of either St Vincent de Paul Senior School or Scoil Mhuire.

During the transition period – which will last until June 2028 – St Vincent de Paul Senior School will have some year groups that are single-sex (all-girls). St Vincent de Paul Senior School does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to an existing single-sex year group

All applications will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee. Allocation to a school, where such allocation is possible, will be determined by school capacity. **The decision of the Admissions Committee is final.**

16. Declaration in Relation to the Non-Charging of Fees

The Boards of Management of St Vincent de Paul Senior School – or any persons acting on their behalf – will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

- a) an application for admission of a pupil to the school, or
- b) the admission or continued enrolment of a pupil in the school.

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17. Arrangements Regarding Pupils not Attending Religious Instruction

Where the parents have requested that the pupil attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school, a written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such pupils.

Families are advised that the school is not in a position to supervise pupils in an area removed from where the religious instruction takes place. Thus, though the pupil will not participate in the religious instruction, they will remain in the classroom under the supervision of the class teacher. During this time, the pupil will engage in activities as agreed between their parent(s) and the Class Teacher, ensuring that they do not impact adversely on the religious instruction taking place. In the event that the parent wishes the teacher to provide resource material, this will require a meeting between the parents and the teacher and be approved by the Principal.

18. Reviews and Appeals

Review of decisions to refuse admission by the Boards of Management

The parent of the pupil 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 DES.

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). 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 pupil may appeal a decision of a 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.

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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 DES.

19. Approval and Review

This Admissions Policy, and the common admissions procedures outlined therein, was sanctioned by the Patron in September 2024, and ratified by the Board of Management in October 2024.

The policy will come into effect in October 2024, in anticipation of enrolments for September 2025. This policy will remain in effect throughout the three-year transition period, covering the enrolment cycles of September 2025, September 2026, and September 2027.

The procedures outlined in this policy will be reviewed annually for the three years of its enactment.

Chairperson

Principal