**Introduction**

St. John of God School, Islandbridge is a co-educational special school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin and the Trusteeship of Saint John of God Hospitaller Ministries. This Admission and Participation Policy has been drawn up by the Board of Management in accordance with the provisions of the education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act 2000.

**General Information**

St. John of God School provides education for pupils between four and eighteen years of age with moderate general learning disabilities (GLD). Two additional classes are designated for students with Severe/Profound GLD and there is one class for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who also have Moderate GLD. The school is not a therapeutic school for pupils with significant emotional and behaviour difficulties. The school has limited access to a Multi-Disciplinary Team.

The school welcomes referrals for enrolment of any pupil who, on assessment, is functioning within the above range of learning disability and that this learning disability is her/his primary special educational need. The school provides an educational service to children residing mainly in the Local Health Office Areas 3, 4, & 5

The selection of pupils for enrolment and discharge is a matter for decision by the Board of Management following consultation with the school Principal and the school’s Admissions Advisory Team. While recognising the rights of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management is also responsible for respecting the rights of the existing school community. This requires balanced judgements and acting in the best interest of all children.

**Mission Statement**

We endeavour to provide an educational curriculum appropriate to the ability of each individual pupil as well as a range of activities designed to enhance the individual’s full potential. We seek to achieve this through a developmental life skills programme and a variety of evidence-based teaching strategies across a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our mission is encapsulated in the motto “Real Education for Real Life”.

**Referral Procedure**

Parents can refer their son/daughter to St. John of God School. If a third party, acting on behalf of a parents, refer a child to our school, it is expected that it is with the parents agreement. The person referring the child is the person the school will enter into correspondence with.

Parents should email the school at info@stjohnofgodschool.com to request the application form. This completed application and psychological forms should be returned to the school before the application deadline.

Applications are processed during the academic year prior to enrolment. In order to allow sufficient time for appropriate assessments to be completed and reviewed, referrals for the following September will be accepted up to February 28th of that year and will be evaluated on the basis of the selection criteria outlined below. Referrals received after February 28th will only be accepted and processed if the school has capacity.

Each year, the Principal will establish how many pupils with moderate/ severe & profound/ ASD & Moderate GLD are leaving the school. This will then determine how many places are available to new applicants.

St. John of God School does not operate a waiting list. From September 1st each year, we accept new referrals for the following school year. Previous applications and accompanying documentation are stored and destroyed in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Unsuccessful applications are not placed on a waiting list for enrolment in future years.

Parents and professionals wishing to enrol a student in the school should forward a letter of referral accompanied by the most recent Psychological Assessment (recommending Special School placement) and previous school report and the completed application form. Other relevant clinical reports such as Speech and Language, Physiotherapy, Psychiatric, Occupational Therapy etc. should also be provided, if available. The referral letter should be addressed to: **info@stjohnofgodschool.com**

**or**

**The Principal, St. John of God School, Islandbridge, Dublin 8, D08 P89W.**

Receipt of Applications will be acknowledged by the school within 21 days of receipt of application.

This acknowledgement does not infer an offer of a place in the school.

A copy of the school’s Enrolment Policy is available on the School Website.

**Criteria for Acceptance**

All applicants will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. That the applicant meets the profile of the school.
2. That appropriate documentation is supplied and an honest account is given regarding the needs of the child to enable the school to make a decision.
3. That there is place in the school appropriate to the age and/or disability category of the applicant. In the event of a category being oversubscribed, priority will decided by date of receipt of completed application.
4. That the applicant’s medical needs can be safely managed by staff.
5. That Parents/Guardians of successful applicant are willing to engage with the school by signing relevant School Policies e.g. Code of Behaviour, Health and Safety and Behaviour Management Policies.
6. That the Health and Safety needs/rights of the applicant and/or other pupils are not compromised.
7. That the school has capacity to provide for the needs of the applicant in the light of the necessary resources available to it.

**Selection Procedure**

1. All applications are assessed by the **Admissions Advisory Team** based on the criteria outlined above. The Admissions Advisory Team is approved by the Board of Management and consists of the Principal, Deputy Principal and Senior Post Holder within the school. Occasionally the team request the professional advice of the Psychologist, Menni Services and/or St. John of God Education Officer. The Principal may at times consult with and seek the advice of the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) and the School Inspector. The team discuss each referral and the accompanying reports to determine the eligibility and needs of the prospective students. Following this, the team prepare a report to present to the Board of Management (B.O.M) for discussion at the next B.O.M. meeting.
2. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school with their child. This does not infer an offer of a place in our school.
3. The school Principal or a member of the Admissions Team meets with prospective students and parents/guardians. It is good practice to complete all National Council for Special Education (NCSE) forms at this stage (see Appendix A)
4. On receipt of all the relevant reports and on completion of necessary meetings/visits, a decision will then be made by the Board of Management as to the suitability of *St. John of God School, Islandbridge* for the prospective pupil.
5. Final decisions in relation to all applications are made by the Board of Management.
6. A letter of offer, signed by the Chairperson, is forwarded to the parent/guardian of the applicant on behalf of the B.O.M.
7. Parents are asked to complete the following

(a) School Acceptance Form.

(b) School Enrolment Information Form.

(c) NCSE Transport Form.

(d) NCSE SNA (abbreviation, need to state in full?) Form.

(e) Medical Protocol Form.

(f) Relevant Policies (see policies listed below Appendix B)

8. We endeavour to ensure that each pupil has a positive and successful experience at our school. For some pupils, a part time placement that increases incrementally to a full day/ week, may be in their best interest. If it is felt this is necessary to ease the new student into the school community, it will be agreed with parents in advance. The criteria for demonstration that the student is ready for an increase in the length of their day will be agreed by the class teacher and parents.

9. All new pupils on their first day in the school are entered on the Primary Online Database (POD) and a letter is sent to their previous school (Appendix C)

**Right to Appeal**

Where an application is not successful, the parent or guardian will be advised of their right to appeal to the Chairperson, Board of Management, St. John of God School in the first instance. This in no way affects their rights under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

**Admission Date**

Normally admission to the school will occur within the first week of the new academic school year. Admission at any other time throughout the school year will be at the discretion of the Board of Management.

**Suspension/Expulsion**

In accordance with the terms and conditions laid down by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23.2, a child may be suspended or expelled. This action will only be taken where there is no alternative and where the safety of students and/or staff is at risk. The regulations of the National Educational Welfare Board will be followed at all times.

**Policy Revision**

It is recognised that this enrolment policy may need to be revised/modified from time to time in the light of ongoing evaluation of new approaches and the implications of relevant future enrolment.

***Amended by Board of Management on 23 August 2018***

***Appendix A***

Procedures for requesting supports from the

National Council for Special Education (NCSE)

An important element of the Enrolment Process in St. John of God School, Islandbridge is to ascertain the individual needs of each student and what supports are required to be in place prior to commencing in school.

The NCSE is the agency empowered to sanction supports in all areas of special education: SNA Support, School Transport and Assistive Technology. All requests to the NCSE are required to have the signatures of the Principal and the Parents / Guardians. Responses to these requests often take months.

I consider it to be in everyone’s best interests if you could consider signing the relevant request form / forms today which you think may be required or helpful to the young person seeking enrolment in St. John of God School, Islandbridge. In addition to signing the request forms please also submit any documentary evidence you may have to support the request forms. This will result in the school being in a position to forward the relevant request forms to the NCSE immediately following the decision of the Board of Management to offer a place. This, in turn, will improve the chances of having transport, SNA support, etc. in place prior to attending on the first day.

Please remember that signing these forms does not guarantee a place in the school. Neither does it guarantee that your request will be granted by the NCSE. However, we do guarantee that you will be informed of any supports we are successful in securing.

Should you require clarity on anything in this form, I am more than happy to discuss it with you. Additionally, should you prefer to wait to sign request forms until after you have secured a place we are happy to accommodate that.

Marie Ryan

School Principal

 ***Appendix B***

***School Policies***

* Admissions and Participation Policy
* Code of Positive Behaviour and Wellbeing
* Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
* Data Protection Policy
* Attendance Policy
* Anti-Bullying Policy
* Internet Policies
* Administration of Medication Policy
* Intimate Care Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Healthy Eating Policy
* School Visitor Policy

***Appendix C***

 Date:

To: **Principal**

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In accordance with **Section 20 (6)** of the **Education Welfare Act**, I wish to inform you that the following student(s) is/are to be enrolled in **St. John of God School, Islandbridge** (Roll No. 19151 C) in the week commencing …

Please ensure that the above named student(s) is/are marked as leavers on Primary Online Database (POD).

 Name: DOB:

Yours sincerely

Marie Ryan

School Principal