Kilmacthomas, Co Waterford

POLICY FOR ADMISSION TO SCHOOL YEAR 2027/2028

St Declan's Community College

A decision on an application for admission will be based on the implementation of this Policy, the information set out in the annual admission notice of the school and the information provided by the Applicant in the application for admission, once received before the closing date set out in the annual Admission Notice. The Principal of St Declan's Community College is responsible for the implementation of this Admission Policy.

INTRODUCTION TO ST. DECLAN'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

St Declan's Community College is a multi-denominational, co-educational community college under the patronage of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB). The school was established in 1969 to address the need for school places for post-primary students in the area. Since then there have been several extensions to the school the most recent of which was completed in December 2025 enabling the school to cater for its growing number of students and staff members.

The delivery of a quality education service coupled with a strong emphasis on pastoral care and positive discipline makes St Declan's Community College a school where students can effectively learn, grow, and thrive.

At St Declan's Community College we develop academic excellence by creating an environment where learning is encouraged and fostered. We provide a diverse range of educational experiences that are challenging and fulfilling. Our dedicated and energetic teachers are encouraged to adopt a student-centred approach to education. This ensures that each individual student's needs are catered for. We believe in empowering and equipping students to achieve their full potential. Great emphasis is placed on the social and personal development of students outside of the academic sphere. There is a vast range of co-curricular activities in which all students are encouraged to participate. The school is committed to the development and care of every person in our school community, where respect for one another is paramount.

Our innovative approach to education, utilising the latest digital technologies, will give our students the best possible preparation for a happy, prosperous, and successful future. At senior cycle, our wide range of LC subjects on offer includes Leaving Certificate Physical Education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART A – *General Information for All Applicants*

1. Glossary of Terms
2. Admission Statement
3. Legal Framework
4. General Admission Provisions

PART B - *Information for Specific Categories of Applicants*

5. Application to the First-Year Group
6. Application to All Year Groups Other Than First-Year
7. Application to the Special Class(es)
8. Appeals

PART A - *General Information for All Applicants*

1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

'**Applicant'** means the parent / guardian of a Student, or, in the case of a Student who has reached the age of 18 years, the Student, who has made an application for admission to St Declan's Community College.

'**Student'** means the person in respect of whom the application is being made. All uses of the word throughout this Policy therefore imply 'prospective' as part of the interpretation. That is, the use of the word 'Student' does not mean that an application or acceptance of offer makes him/her a student of St Declan's Community College; a person is only regarded as a student of St Declan's Community College once s/he is enrolled on his/her first day of attendance. It does not include a person who was formerly enrolled in the school and was permanently excluded from the school or who left the school after being recommended for expulsion by the Board of Management.

'Enrolled' means attending the school as a registered student, in line with section 20(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

'**Gender'**, in line with the definition of "*the gender ground*" in the Equal Status Act 2000, is such that "*one is male and the other is female*". This does not prejudice any Student who is Intersex or identifies as Androgynous/Androgyne, Bigender, Demigender, Gender Fluid, Genderqueer, Multigender, Neutrois, Non-binary, Transgender, Transsexual or otherwise.

'**Catchment Area'** refers to the designated residential area for application to St Declan's Community College in respect of the person on whose behalf the application is being made. The catchment area for St Declan's Community College is defined as having any of the following areas as part of an applicant's address; Annestown, Ballyduff Lower, Ballylaneen, Bonmahon, Butlerstown, Clonea Power, Dunhill, Faha, Fenor, Fews, Garranbane, Kill, Kilmacthomas, Kilmeaden, Kilrossanty, Knockmahon, Leamybrien, Newtown (Kilmacthomas), Portlaw, Rathgormack, Seafield, or Stradbally.

'**Catchment Area for the Special Classes'** refers to the designated residential area for application to the Special Classes within St Declan's Community College in respect of the person on whose behalf the application is being made. The catchment area for the Special Classes within St Declan's Community College is defined as having any of the following areas as part of an applicant's address; Annestown, Ballyduff Lower, Ballylaneen, Bonmahon, Butlerstown, Clonea Power, Dunhill, Faha, Fenor, Fews, Garranbane, Kill, Kilmacthomas, Kilmeaden, Kilrossanty, Knockmahon, Leamybrien, Newtown (Kilmacthomas), Portlaw, Rathgormack, Seafield, or Stradbally.

'**Parent'** has the same meaning as in the Education Act 1998 and includes a guardian appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts, 1964 to 1997.

'PPOD' refers to the Post-Primary On-line Database IT system hosted by the Department of Education and Youth.

'**Feeder Primary Schools'** refers to the primary schools of preference for application to St Declan's Community College. The feeder primary schools for St Declan's Community College are categorised into 3 groups prioritising primary schools in and closely adjacent to the Department of Education and Youth School Planning Area whose students are likely to live in the School Planning Area for St Declan's Community College.

Group 1 (in no particular order)

1.1 Scoil Choill Mhic Thomaisin, Kilmacthomas, Co Waterford
1.2 Scoil Naisiunta an Baile Nua, Kilmacthomas, Co Waterford
1.3 Scoil Naisiunta na Bhfiodh, Kilmacthomas, Co Waterford

Group 2 (in no particular order)

1.4 Ballyduff National School, Kilmeaden, Co Waterford
1.5 Scoil Naisiunta Aine Naofa Seafield, Bonmahon, Co Waterford
1.6 Scoil Naisiunta Cnoc Mahon, Knockmahon, Bunmahon Co Waterford
1.7 Scoil Naisiunta na Cille, Kill, Kilmacthomas, Co Waterford
1.8 St James' National School/Stradbally Church of Ireland National School, Stradbally, Co Waterford

Group 3 (in no particular order)

1.9 Clonea National School, Carrick on Suir, Co Waterford
1.10 Fionnabhair National School, Fenor, Co Waterford
1.11 Our Lady of Mercy National School, Stradbally, Co Waterford
1.12 Portlaw National School, Portlaw, Co Waterford
1.13 Rathgormack National School, Rathgormack, Co Waterford
1.14 Scoil Mhuire, Butlerstown, Co Waterford
1.15 Scoil Naisiunta an Garrain Bhain, Dungarvan, Co Waterford
1.16 Scoil Naisiunta Cill Rosanta, Kilrossanty, Kilmacthomas, Co Waterford
1.17 Scoil Naisiunta Dun Aill, Dunhill, Co Waterford
1.18 Waterford Educate Together N.S., Carrickpherish, Waterford City[1]

For the purpose of this policy **'Staff member'** refers to Teachers registered with the Teaching Council and who are currently contracted by WWETB to teach in this school in a PWT/CID/FT capacity, and who are currently (at the time of application), employed on an ongoing and non-temporary basis by the WWETB.

For the purpose of the selection criterion relating to the Student having a sibling who previously attended the school, '**Sibling'** refers to full siblings, half-siblings, foster-siblings and step-siblings.

For the purpose of the selection criterion relating to the Student having a sibling currently enrolled in the school, '**Sibling'** refers to full siblings, half-siblings, foster-siblings, step-siblings and students who reside in the same household.

Note: the wider definition of sibling in the second of the two paragraphs immediately above is for the purpose of facilitating families who are required to do more than one drop-off and/or collection to/from the school.

'**Special Class'** means a class that has, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, been established by a school to provide an education exclusively for Students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister for Education and Youth. St Declan's Community College Special Classes, established to cater for special educational needs of Students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

'Relevant Report', as advised by the Department of Education and Youth and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), means a written report, based on an assessment by a relevant professional, which:

a. provides detailed evidence of the Student's needs,
b. confirms that those needs constitute complex/severe education needs which arise from a named diagnosis relating to the Student, and
c. makes a recommendation for a Special Class placement for the Student on the basis of his/her complex/severe educational needs arising from said diagnosis.

The relevant professional may include an educational psychologist, psychologist, other relevant health professionals, HSE disability services or HSE multi-disciplinary team staff, in line with guidance issued by the NCSE on this point.

'First-Year' means the intake group of students for the most junior class or year in a school.

[1] *Provided that St Declan's' Community College is the nearest multi denominational post primary school to the applicant's normal residence. Where that is not the case, the Applicant is not regarded as having attend a feeder primary school for St Declan's Community College*

2 ADMISSION STATEMENT

ETB schools are state, co-educational, multidenominational schools underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education;
- Care;
- Equality;
- Community and
- Respect.

As the state provider of education, the ETB sector defines a 'multidenominational' school in the following way:

In ETB schools, all students are given equal opportunities for enrolment in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018. Once enrolled, our schools strive to provide all students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum and school life. In all aspects of school life all members of our school communities are treated equitably regardless of their race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status.

Our schools provide a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. They strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. Our schools promote a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values.

In ETB schools, students of all religions and beliefs are treated equally. The school environment and activities do not privilege any particular group over another whilst at the same time acknowledging and facilitating students of all religions and beliefs.

St Declan's Community College shall not discriminate in its admission of a student based on the following grounds:

2.1. Gender of the Student or Applicant. However, where a school admits students of one gender only, it is not discriminatory to refuse to admit Students not of that gender;
2.2. Civil status of the Student or Applicant;
2.3. Family status of the Student or Applicant;
2.4. Sexual orientation of the Student or Applicant;
2.5. Religion of the Student or Applicant;
2.6. Disability of the Student or Applicant;
2.7. Race of the Student or Applicant;
2.8. The Student's or Applicant's membership of the Traveller community;
2.9. Special educational needs of the Student or Applicant. However, where the school provides education exclusively for a category or categories of special educational need(s) in a Special Class, it is not discriminatory to refuse to admit to that class a student who does not have the specified special educational need(s).

St. Declan's Community College will cooperate 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. Declan's Community College 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.

St Declan's Community College shall not charge fees or payments or seek contributions as a condition of admission or continued enrolment of a Student.

3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

WWETB was established under the Education and Training Board Act 2013 which sets out the functions of all ETBs, including to establish and maintain recognised schools, centres for education and education and training facilities in each ETB's functional area.

The board of management of St Declan's Community College is a committee established under section 44 of the Education and Training Board Act 2013 and also constitutes a board of management within the meaning of the Education Act 1998.

The Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 place a duty on all recognised schools to prepare and publish an Admission Policy.

The Education Act, 1998 provides for an appeal process in the event of a refusal to admit a student. The appeal process is set out in section 8 in respect of all applications made to St. Declan's Community College.

It is important to understand that our school does not provide '*religious instruction*' and therefore the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise in this school. It is also important to understand the distinction between *'religious instruction'* and r*eligious education'*:

- *Religious instruction* is a term used in Ireland to indicate instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a **particular** religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.
- *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.

As ETB schools are 'multi-denominational', St Declan's Community College supports the provision of *religious education* that caters for all students regardless of their religious or non-religious beliefs.

4 GENERAL ADMISSION PROVISIONS

A decision on an application for admission shall be based on:

- the implementation of this Admission Policy,
- the annual admission notice of the school, and the
- information provided by the Applicant in the application for admission.

In processing an application St Declan's Community College **shall not consider**:

4.1 The payment of fees or contributions to the school;

4.2 A Student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; unless; unless it is necessary to ascertain whether or not the Student has the category of special educational needs concerned for admission to a school approved by the Minister for Education and Youth providing education exclusively to students with a specified category of special educational needs or a special class;

4.3 The occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a Student's parent(s);

4.4 A requirement that a Student or his or her parent(s), attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;

4.5 A Student's connection to the school due to a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school, unless the connection is a sibling of the Student concerned currently attending, or having attended, the school, or a parent or grandparent having previously attended the school. However, the maximum number of places filled by this criterion does not exceed 25% of the available places as set out in the school's Admission Notice for that academic year.

4.6 The date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school as long as it is received during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admissions notice.

St Declan's Community College will consider the offer of a place to every student seeking admission to the school, **unless any one of the following applies**:

4.7 The Parent fails to confirm in writing that s/he accepts the student Code of Positive Behaviour and he/she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student;

4.8 The student seeking admission to a Special Class in the school does not have the category of special educational needs specified by the Minister for Education and Youth in respect of that class.

Where St Declan's Community College considers an application, each student shall receive a place, unless the school is oversubscribed, in which case, selection criteria will be applied to each application.

Section 5 of this Policy addresses the selection criteria and other matters related to the admission provisions for the first-year group.

Section 6 of this Policy addresses the selection criteria and other matters related to the admission provisions for all year groups other than first-year.

Section 7 of this Policy addresses the selection criteria and other matters related to the admission provisions for the special classes.

Section 8 of this policy provides information on the appeals process.

PART B - *Information for Specific Categories of Applicants*

5 APPLICATION TO THE FIRST-YEAR GROUP

In the event that St Declan's Community College is not oversubscribed, all Students will be offered a school place, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8.

A student applying for the First-Year Group but seeking admission to the Special Class should see section 7 of this Admissions Policy. If the Student is also applying for a place in the mainstream First-Year Group in the event of an unsuccessful application to the Special Class, this section 5 is also applicable.

For clarity, it is possible to seek admission to both the Special Class and the mainstream First-Year group and be offered a place in both the Special Class and the mainstream First-Year Group or the mainstream First-Year group only. It is not possible to be offered a place in the Special Class only.

Incomplete applications received by the school will not be processed under the policy.

5.1.1 Oversubscription

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the published selection criteria as set out at section 5.1.2 below will apply and a waiting list shall be compiled which shall remain valid for the school year in respect of which the applications are made. Where St Declan's Community College is in a position to offer further school places that become available for and during that academic year, places will be offered in accordance with the order of priority in which Students have been placed on the waiting list, subject to the provisions of section 7.1.1 regarding the Special Class.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a Student does not receive a place in the school for a given academic year, but s/he wishes to be considered for admission in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that Student during the dates specified by the school as being the period when it will accept applications to all year groups other than First-Year.

Where an application is made on behalf of a Student for both the Special Class and a mainstream year group, and his/her application for one but not both is successful, s/he will remain in the same position on the waiting list for the group to which s/he was not successful, regardless of whether the Applicant accepts the place in the group to which the Student was successful.

Where the school is oversubscribed, any selection criteria that are not included in this Admission Policy shall not be considered in determining whether or not a Student is admitted to the school.

5.1.2 Selection criteria in order of priority

St Declan's Community College will apply the following criteria for admission to the first-year group:

5.1.2.1 If the student has a sibling(s) currently enrolled in the school or is the and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in First Year, after having completed sixth class in primary school (or equivalent);

5.1.2.2 If the student is the son/daughter of a staff member employed at St. Declan's Community College and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in First Year, after having completed sixth class in primary school (or equivalent);

5.1.2.3 Whether the Student, at the time of application, is attending one of the Feeder Primary Schools listed in Group 1 in the glossary of terms of this policy and has been enrolled there for at least one full academic year and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in First Year, after having completed sixth class in primary

school (or equivalent); (5 marks);

5.1.2.4 Whether the Student, at the time of application, is attending one of the Feeder Primary Schools listed in Group 2 in the glossary of terms of this policy and has been enrolled there for at least one full academic year and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in First Year, after having completed sixth class in primary school (or equivalent); (4 marks);

5.1.2.5 Whether the Student, at the time of application, is attending one of the Feeder Primary Schools listed in Group 3 in the glossary of terms of this policy and has been enrolled there for at least one full academic year and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in First Year, after having completed sixth class in primary school (or equivalent); (3 marks);

5.1.2.6 If the Student resides in the catchment area (3 marks);

5.1.2.7 If the student has siblings who were previously enrolled in the school for at least one academic year and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in First Year, after having completed sixth class in primary school (or equivalent); (2 marks);

5.1.2.8 If the Student had a parent or grandparent who previously attended the school (to a maximum of 25% of the places available) (1 mark);

5.1.2.9 All other applicants who will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in First Year, after having completed sixth class in primary school (or equivalent).

5.1.2.10 All other applicants.

See section 7 for selection criteria applicable to admission to the Special Class.

5.1.3 Selection process

St Declan's Community College will apply the selection process as follows:

Applications are considered against the published selection criteria. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the first criterion. Where two or more applications are tied on this criterion, St Declan's Community College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the relevant year group, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

Subsequently, where the relevant year group still has places available, the remaining Applicants are considered in light of the second criterion and those Applicants who meet this criterion will be offered a place within the relevant year group or on the waiting list. Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process, St Declan's Community College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the relevant year group, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

Subsequently, the remaining applicants are considered in light of criteria 5.1.2.3., 5.1.2.4, 5.1.2.5, 5.1.2.6 and 5.1.2.7 and the mark for each criterion (indicated in brackets beside it above) is allocated to each application. Places will be allocated in order of score, starting with the highest-scoring Applicant and continuing down the ranking until all remaining places have been filled. Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process (i.e. have the same marks), St Declan's Community College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the school, or on the waiting list, to those applications until all Applicants who meet criteria 5.1.2.3., 5.1.2.4, 5.1.2.5, 5.1.2.6 and 5.1.2.7 are assigned any available places in the school, or onto the waiting list.

Subsequently, any remaining applications are considered against the published selection criteria 5.1.2.8 and 5.1.2.9. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the criterion 5.1.2.8. Where two or more applications are tied under that criterion, St Declan's Community College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the relevant year group, or on the waiting list, to those

applications. Finally, applications are considered against criterion 5.1.2.9 and where two or more applications are tied under that criterion, St Declan's Community College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the relevant year group, or on the waiting list, to those applications

N.B. The number of places available in a year group is subject to reduction in the event that a placement(s) in the Special Class is/are given to Student(s) from that year group, *i.e.* the selection process for the Special Class will be completed before the selection process for the mainstream year group and the number of Students who are offered a place in the Special Class will be the number by which the places in the relevant mainstream year group(s) are reduced.[1]

5.1.4 Late applications

An application received by St Declan's Community College after the closing date published by St Declan's Community College, and set out in the Admission Notice, is considered a late application for the purposes of this Admission Policy.

Where the relevant year group is oversubscribed and receives a late application for admission, that application will receive a place on the waiting list beneath Applicants whose applications were received by the school before the closing date for applications, irrespective of any selection criteria which may have been applied to applications received before the closing date for applications. Such late applications will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the date and time they were received by the school subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8. For the avoidance of doubt, selection criteria are not relevant to, and will not be applied to, late applications.

Where the relevant year group is not oversubscribed, i.e. there is no waiting list, and it receives a late application, the Student seeking admission will receive an offer of a place within the relevant year group College, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8 and the same process as applies to Applicants whose applications were received before the closing date will be operated *i.e.* an Acceptance Form will be issued to the Applicant for completion and return to the school by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place.

5.1.5 Second/third-round offers of a place

Where a Student is in receipt of an offer of a place within the relevant year group but does not accept the offer, or fails to accept within the specified time period, or the school withdraws the offer in line with the relevant provisions of this Policy, the place will be offered to the next Student on the waiting list in a second-round of offers. This process will continue throughout third and fourth rounds *etc.* until all places within the relevant year group have been filled.

5.1.6 Acceptance of a place

If the Student in respect of whom the application is made is offered a place, the Applicant will be issued with an Acceptance Form by the school.

The Applicant shall indicate acceptance of an offer by fully completing and returning the Acceptance Form by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer. This includes indicating whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school.

Failure to fully complete and return the Acceptance Form to the school by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or or by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer, may result in withdrawal of an offer, in line with the grounds for

[1] This, which requires that: "*A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out …. or the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated* ."

refusal as set out below.

When inputting the student's data on PPOD (Post-Primary Online Database hosted by the Department of Education and Youth) if it comes to St. Declan's Community College's attention that the student is enrolled in more than one school, it will be necessary for St. Declan's Community College to contact the conflicting school to resolve the conflict. If it is confirmed that the student will be attending the conflicting school, St. Declan's Community College will need to delete the student's record from its PPOD and withdraw the offer of admission. If the Student is to be attending St. Declan's Community College, no further action is required by St. Declan's Community College.

5.1.7 Refusal

Where a Student in respect of whom an application is being sought has not been offered a school place, the Applicant will be provided in writing with:

5.1.7.1. The reasons that the Student was not a offered a place in St Declan's Community College.

5.1.7.2. Details of the Student's ranking against the published selection criteria if the year-group to which the Applicant is applying is oversubscribed,

5.1.7.3. Details of the Student's place on the waiting list, if applicable, and

5.1.7.4. Details of the Applicant's right to appeal the decision.

In addition to the conditions for consideration of an application as set out at 4.7 and 4.8, an offer of admission may not be made where:

5.1.7.5. The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect

5.1.8 Withdrawal of an offer

An offer of admission may be withdrawn where:

5.1.8.1. The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect, or

5.1.8.2. The 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 for the academic year for which s/he is applying, or in the case of a late application, or second/third-round offer, by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place, or

5.1.8.3. An Applicant has not indicated:

(i) whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s) and if so, the details of the school(s); and

(ii) whether or not or s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s) and if so, the details of the offer(s), or

5.1.8.4. It is confirmed that the student will be attending the conflicting school following it coming to St. Declan's Community College's attention on PPOD that the student is enrolled in more than one school.

If an offer of a place is withdrawn by the school, the student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place for that academic year (and shall not be placed on a waiting list). If the Applicant still desires a place for that academic year, a new application must be made for the same academic year on behalf of that Student and shall be treated as a late application in line with section 5.1.4 above.

6 APPLICATION TO ALL YEAR GROUPS OTHER THAN FIRST-YEAR

In the event St Declan's Community College is not oversubscribed, all Students will be offered a school place, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8.

A Student applying for admission to a year-group other than First-Year but seeking admission to the Special Class should see section 7 of this Admissions Policy. If the Student is also applying for a place in the mainstream year group other than First-Year in the event of an unsuccessful application to the Special Class, this section 6 is also applicable.

For clarity, it is possible to seek admission to both the Special Class and the mainstream Year group and be offered a place in both the Special Class and the mainstream Year Group or the mainstream Year group only. It is not possible to be offered a place in the Special Class only.

Incomplete applications received by the school will not be processed under this policy.

6.1.1 Oversubscription

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the published selection criteria as set out at section 6.1.2 below will apply and a waiting list shall be compiled which shall remain valid for the school year in respect of which the applications are made. Where St Declan's Community College is in a position to offer further school places that become available for and during that academic year year, places will be offered in accordance with the order of priority in which Students have been placed on the waiting list, subject to the provisions of section 7.1.1 regarding the Special Class.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a Student does not receive a place in the school for a given academic year, but s/he wishes to be considered for admission in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that Student during the dates specified by the school as being the period when it will accept applications to all years other than the First Year Group.

Where an application is made on behalf of a Student for both the Special Class and a mainstream year group, and his/her application for one but not both is successful, s/he will remain in the same position on the waiting list for the group to which s/he was not successful, regardless of whether the Applicant accepts the place in the group to which the Student was successful.

Where the school is oversubscribed, any selection criteria that are not included in this Admission Policy shall not be considered in determining whether or not a Student is admitted to the school.

Where the Transition Year Programme and/or Leaving Certificate Applied Programme in St Declan's Community College is/are oversubscribed, a Student applying for admission to such programme(s) in the relevant year group, will, subject to this policy, be placed on the appropriate waiting list already compiled (annually) by the school, which list will contain the names of students enrolled in the school who have been placed on an internal waiting list for these programme(s).

6.1.2 Selection criteria in order of priority

St Declan's Community College will apply the following criteria for admission to a year-group other than First-Year:

6.1.2.1 If the student has a sibling(s) currently enrolled in the school;

6.1.2.2 If the student is the son/daughter of a staff member employed at St Declan's Community College;

6.1.2.3 If the Student resides in the catchment area;

6.1.2.4 If the Student has siblings who were previously enrolled in the school for at least one academic year;

6.1.2.5 If the Student had a parent who previously attended the school (to a maximum of 25% of the places available)

See section 7 for selection criteria applicable to admission to the Special Class.

6.1.3 Selection Process

St Declan's Community College will apply the selection process as follows:

Applications are considered against the published selection criteria. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the first criterion. Subsequently, where the relevant year group still has places available, the remaining Applicants are considered in light of the second criterion and those Applicants who meet this criterion will be offered a place within the relevant year group. This process is continuously carried out against all selection criteria until all available places have been offered and accepted.

Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process, St Declan's Community College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the relevant year group, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

N.B. The number of places in a year group is subject to reduction in the event that a placement(s) in the Special Class is/are given to Student(s) from that year group, i.e. the selection process for the Special Class will be completed before the selection process for the mainstream year group and the number of Students who are offered a place in the Special class will be the number by which the places in the relevant mainstream year group(s) are reduced.[2]

6.1.4 Late applications

An application received by St Declan's Community College after the closing date published by St Declan's Community College, and set out in the Admission Notice, is considered a late application for the purposes of this Admission Policy.

Where the relevant year group is oversubscribed and receives a late application for admission, that application will receive a place on the waiting list beneath Applicants whose applications were received by St Declan's Community College before the closing date for applications, irrespective of any selection criteria which may have been applied to applications received before the closing date for applications. Such late applications will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the date and time they were received by the school subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8. For the avoidance of doubt, selection criteria are not relevant to, and will not be applied to, late applications.

Where the relevant year group is not oversubscribed, ie there is not waiting list, and it receives a late application, the Student seeking admission will receive an offer of a place within the relevant year group, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8 and the same process as applies to Applicants whose applications were received before the closing date will be applied *i.e.* an Acceptance Form will be issued to the Applicant for completion and return to the school by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place.

6.1.5 Second/third-round offers of a place

Where a Student is in receipt of an offer of a place within the relevant year group but does not accept the offer or the school withdraws the offer in line with the relevant provisions of this Policy, the place will be offered to the next Student on the waiting list in a second-round of offers. This process will continue throughout third and fourth rounds *etc.* until all places within the relevant year group have been filled.

6.1.6 Acceptance of a place

[2] This approach is based on section 2 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004, which requires that: "*A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out …. or the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated* ."

If the Student in respect of whom the application is made is offered a place, the Applicant will be issued with an Acceptance Form by the school.

The Applicant shall indicate acceptance of an offer by fully completing and returning the Acceptance Form by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer. This includes indicating whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school.

Failure to fully complete and return the Acceptance Form to the school by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer, may result in withdrawal of an offer, in line with the grounds for refusal as set out below.

When inputting the Student's data on PPOD (Post-Primary Online Database hosted by the Department of Education and Youth) if it comes to St. Declan's Community College's attention that the Student is enrolled in more than one school, it will be necessary for St. Declan's Community College to contact the conflicting school to resolve the conflict. If it is confirmed that the Student will be attending the conflicting school, St. Declan's Community College will need to delete the Student's record from its PPOD and withdraw the offer of admission. If the Student is to be attending St. Declan's Community College, no further action is required by St. Declan's Community College.

It is the responsibility of the Student and Parent to ensure that they bring all information regarding Classroom Based Assessments or other completed coursework with them when transferring from another school. St. Declan's Community College cannot be responsible for coursework undertaken prior to the Student enrolling in St. Declan's Community College.

6.1.7 Refusal

Where a Student in respect of whom an application is being sought has not been offered a school place, the Applicant will be provided in writing with:

6.1.7.1. The reasons that the Student was not a offered a place in St Declan's Community College.

6.1.7.2. Details of the Student's ranking against the published selection criteria, if the year group to which the Applicant is applying is oversubscribed.

6.1.7.3. Details of the Student's place on the waiting list, if applicable

6.1.7.4. Details of the Applicant's right to appeal the decision

In addition to the conditions for consideration of an application as set out at 4.7 and 4.8, an offer of admission may not be made where:

6.1.7.5. The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect

6.1.8 Withdrawal of an offer

An offer of admission may be withdrawn where:

6.1.8.1 The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect, or

6.1.8.2 The 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 for the academic year for which s/he is applying, or in the case of a late application, or second/third-round offer, by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place, or

6.1.8.3 An Applicant has not indicated:

i. whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s) and if so, the details of the school(s); and

ii. whether or not or s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s) and if so, the details of the offer(s), or

6.1.8.4 It is confirmed that the student will be attending the conflicting school following it coming to St. Declan's Community College attention on PPOD that the Student is enrolled in more than one school.

If an offer of a place is withdrawn by the school, the Student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place for that academic year (and shall not be placed on a waiting list). If the Applicant still desires a place for that academic year, a new application must be made for the same academic year on behalf of that Student and shall be treated as a late application in line with section 6.1.4 above.

7 APPLICATION TO THE SPECIAL CLASS

St Declan's Community College has three Special Classes, established to provide education to Students with severe/complex educational needs arising from Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Only applications in respect of Students whose needs fall within the category of special educational needs provided for by the Special Class will be considered. In this respect, the school requires that such severe/complex educational needs and the related diagnosis of the Student be evidenced and verified in a Relevant Report[3] the mandatory elements of which are set out in the Glossary of Terms section. The school also requires documentation from the NCSE (National Council for Special Education) confirming that the Student is known to the NCSE and has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class, in addition to a Relevant Report. This letter of eligibility from the NCSE is applicable for admission for one school year only i.e. the school year for which admission is sought.

For clarity, it is possible to seek admission to both the Special Class and the mainstream Year group and be offered a place in either both the Special Class and the mainstream Year Group or the mainstream Year group only. It is not possible to be offered a place in the Special Class only.

In the event that the Special Class in St Declan's Community College, is not oversubscribed, all Students whose needs fall within the category of special educational needs provided for by the Special Class and who submit the requisite Relevant Report together with the documentation from the NCSE, will be offered a place in the Special Class, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8.

Incomplete applications received by the school will not be processed under this policy.

7.1.1 Oversubscription

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the published selection criteria as set out at section 7.1.2 below will apply and a waiting list shall be compiled which shall remain valid only for the school year in respect of which the applications are made. Where St Declan's Community College is in a position to offer further school places that become available in the Special Class for and during that academic year, places will be offered in accordance with the order of priority in which Students have been placed on the waiting list subject to there being a place in the relevant mainstream year group.

If there is not a place available in the relevant year group, the next person on the waiting list for the Special Class will be considered for the place in question but this will not change the initial Student's place on the waiting list for the Special Class for the remainder of that school year, i.e. if another place subsequently became available in the Special Class during that school year, the initial Student at the top of the waiting list would be considered first, but again subject to there being a place in the relevant year group for that Student.

For clarity, if a place becomes available in a given mainstream class group, before that place is offered to a Student on the waiting list for that mainstream year group, the waiting list for the Special Class shall be reviewed and if there is a place available in the Special Class and there is a Student on the waiting list who would be able to take-up the place due to the available place in the given mainstream year group, that Student will be offered the place in the Special Class (thereby removing the place in the mainstream year group). This is in the interest of ensuring that the scarce resources of the Special Class are never under-utilised.

Where an application is made on behalf of a Student for both the Special Class and a mainstream year group, and his/her application for one but not both is successful, s/he will remain in the same position on the waiting list for the group to which s/he was not successful, regardless of whether the Applicant accepts

[3] *Please read details regarding the 'Relevant Report' in Glossary of Terms in Part A of this policy.*

the place in the group to which the Student was successful.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a Student does not receive a place in the Special Class for a given academic year, but s/he wishes to be considered for admission to the Special Class in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that Student during the dates specified by the school as being the period when it will accept applications for the Special Class.

Where the school is oversubscribed, any selection criteria that are not included in this Admission Policy shall not be considered in determining whether or not a Student is admitted to the school.

7.1.2 <u>Selection criteria in order of priority</u>

Applications to the Special Class will only be considered if the Student's needs fall within the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this class. Subject to this requirement, in the event of oversubscription, the following criteria for admission to the Special Class will apply:

7.1.2.1 The greatest level of need, as determined by the Principal in consultation with the SEN team in the school, having considered the Relevant Report in respect of the Child and the Student will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class;

7.1.2.2 If the student is currently enrolled in the school and did attend one of the Feeder Primary Schools listed in Group 1 in the glossary of term of this policy;

7.1.2.3 If the student has a sibling(s) currently enrolled in the school and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class;

7.1.2.4 If the student is the son/daughter of a staff member employed at St Declan's Community College and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class;

7.1.2.5 Whether the Student, at the time of application, is attending or, in the case of an applicant to a year group other than First Year, did attend one of the Feeder Primary Schools listed in Group 1 in the glossary of terms of this policy and has been enrolled there for at least one full academic year and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class; (5 marks)

7.1.2.6 Whether the Student, at the time of application, is attending or, in the case of an applicant to a year group other than First Year, did attend one of the Feeder Primary Schools listed in Group 2 in the glossary of terms of this policy and has been enrolled there for at least one full academic year and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class; (4 marks)

7.1.2.7 Whether the Student, at the time of application, is attending or, in the case of an applicant to a year group other than First Year, did attend one of the Feeder Primary Schools listed in Group 2 in the glossary of terms of this policy and has been enrolled there for at least one full academic year and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class; (3 marks)

7.1.1.1 If the Student resides in the catchment area (3 marks)

7.1.1.2 If the Student has siblings who were previously enrolled in the school for at least one full year, and will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class; (2 marks)

7.1.1.3 If the Student had a parent or grandparent who previously attended the school (to a maximum of 25% of the places available) (1 mark)

7.1.1.4 All other applicants who will have attained 12 years of age by the 31st January of the academic year to which s/he is applying to be enrolled in the Special Class;

7.1.1.5 All other applicants.

7.1.2 Selection process

St Declan's Community College will apply the selection process as follows:

Having met the criteria for admission to the Special Class, applications are considered against the published selection criteria. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the first criterion. Subsequently, where the Special Class still has places available, the remaining Applicants are considered in light of the second criterion and those Applicants who meet this criterion will be offered a place within the Special Class. This process is continuously carried out against all selection criteria until all available places have been offered and accepted.

Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process, St Declan's Community College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the Special Class, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

N.B. The number of places available in a year group is subject to reduction in the event that a placement(s) in the Special Class is/are given to Student(s) from that year group, i.e. the selection process for the Special Class will be completed before the selection process for the mainstream year group and the number of Students who are offered a place in the Special Class will be the number by which the places in the relevant mainstream year group(s) are reduced.[4]

7.1.3 Late applications

An application received by St Declan's Community College after the closing date published by St Declan's Community College, and set out in the Admission Notice, is considered a late application for the purposes of this Admission Policy.

Where the Special Class is oversubscribed and receives a late application for admission, same will receive a place on the waiting list beneath Applicants whose applications were received by St Declan's Community College before the closing date for applications, irrespective of any selection criteria which may have been applied to applications received before the closing date for applications. Such late applications will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the date and time they were received by the school subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8 and confirmation by the NCSE. For the avoidance of doubt, selection criteria are not relevant to, and will not be applied to, late applications.

Where the Special Class is not oversubscribed, i.e. there is no waiting list, and it receives a late application, the Student seeking admission will receive an offer of a place in the Special Class, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8 and the same process as applies to Applicants whose applications were received before the closing date will be applied *i.e.* an Acceptance Form will be issued to the Applicant for completion and return to the school by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place.

7.1.4 Second/third-round offers of a place

Where a Student is in receipt of an offer of a place within St Declan's Community College but does not accept the offer, or the school withdraws the offer in line with the relevant provisions of this Policy, the place will be offered to the next Student on the waiting list in a second-round of offers. This process will continue throughout third and fourth rounds *etc.* until all places within the Special Class have been filled.

[4] This approach is based on section 2 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004, which requires that: "*A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out …. or the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated* ."

7.1.5 Acceptance of a place

If the Student in respect of whom the application is made is offered a place, the Applicant will be issued with an Acceptance Form by the school.

The Applicant shall indicate acceptance of an offer by fully completing and returning the Acceptance Form by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer. This includes indicating whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school.

Failure to fully complete and return the Acceptance Form to the school by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer, may result in withdrawal of an offer, in line with the grounds for refusal as set out below.

When inputting the Student's data on PPOD (Post-Primary Online Database hosted by the Department of Education and Youth) if it comes to St. Declan's Community College's attention that the Student is enrolled in more than one school, it will be necessary for St. Declan's Community College to contact the conflicting school to resolve the conflict. If it is confirmed that the Student will be attending the conflicting school, St. Declan's Community College will need to delete the Student's record from its PPOD and withdraw the offer of admission. If the Student is to be attending St. Declan's Community College, no further action is required by St. Declan's Community College.

7.1.6 Refusal

Where a Student in respect of whom an application is being sought has not been offered a school place, the Applicant will be provided in writing with:

7.1.6.1 The reasons that the Student was not a offered a place in St Declan's Community College.

7.1.6.2 Details of the Student's ranking against the published selection criteria, if the year-group to which the applicant is applying is oversubscribed,

7.1.6.3 Details of the Student's place on the waiting list, if applicable, and

7.1.6.4 Details of the Applicant's right to appeal the decision.

In addition to the conditions for consideration of an application as set out at 4.7 and 4.8 an offer of admission may not be made where:

7.1.6.5 The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect.

7.1.7 Withdrawal of an offer

An offer of admission may be withdrawn where:

7.1.7.1 The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect, or

7.1.7.2 The 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 for the academic year for which s/he is applying, or in the case of a late application, or second/third-round offer, by the date stated for same in the letter offering the place, or

7.1.7.3 An Applicant has not indicated:

(i) whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s) and if so, the details of the school(s); and

(ii) whether or not or s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s) and if so, the details of the offer(s), or

7.1.7.4 It is confirmed that the Student will be attending the conflicting school following it coming to St. Declan's Community College's attention on PPOD that the Student is enrolled in more than one school.

If an offer of a place is withdrawn by the school, the Student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place for that academic year (and shall not be placed on a waiting list). If the Applicant still desires a place for that academic year, a new application must be made for the same academic year on behalf of that Student and shall be treated as a late application in line with section 7.1.4 above.

8 APPEALS

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.

8.1 Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription

An Applicant who was refused admission because the school is oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision **must** first request a review by the board of management in writing, via a BOMR1 Form, available from the school office and at https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/8248c-appeals-in-relation-to-refusal-to-admit-a-student-due-to-a-school-being-oversubscribed/#how-to-seek-a-review-by-the-board-of-management for it to be reviewed by the board of management of St. Declan's Community College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education and Youth after the publication of this Policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or by emailing stdeclanscc@wwetb.ie.

If an Applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the board of management, or the board of management is not in a position to review the decision to refuse admission, the Applicant may apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by the Minister for Education and Youth under section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form', available at https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/8248c-appeals-in-relation-to-refusal-to-admit-a-student-due-to-a-school-being-oversubscribed/#how-to-appeal-if-a-child-has-been-refused-admission-because-the-school-is-full and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education and Youth or the appeal can be submitted online by uploading the required documentation at https://www.section29appeals.gov.ie/. Alternatively a section 29 appeal form can be downloaded at 697cb0e2-section-29-appeal-application-form-for-an-appeal-against-refusal-to-admit-due.pdf and sent together with all supporting documents by registered post to the address on the form. As per the Department of Education and Youth's '*Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under section 29*', such an appeal must not be brought until the Applicant has received correspondence from the board of management in relation to the review, or until 42 calendar days have passed since the date of initial refusal, whichever is earlier, and an appeal may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

8.2 Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription

An Applicant who was refused admission to St. Declan's Community College for a reason other than the school being oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision **may** choose to request a review by the board of management, via a 'BOMR1 Form', available from the school office and at https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/31c4f-appeals-in-relation-to-refusal-to-admit-a-student-for-a-reason-other-than-the-school-being-oversubscribed/#how-to-seek-a-review-by-the-board-of-management, for it to be reviewed by the board of management of St. Declan's Community College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education and Youth after the publication of this policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or online by emailing stdeclanscc@wwetb.ie (An applicant may withdraw a request for review at any time prior to the conclusion of the review by notifying the board of management in writing to that effect.)

Alternatively, s/he may choose to apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by

the Minister for Education and Youth under section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form', available at https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/31c4f-appeals-in-relation-to-refusal-to-admit-a-student-for-a-reason-other-than-the-school-being-oversubscribed/#how-to-appeal-if-my-child-has-been-refused-admission-and-the-school-has-places-available and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education and Youth or the appeal can be submitted online by uploading the required documentation at https://www.section29appeals.gov.ie/. Alternatively a section 29 appeal form can be downloaded at 697cb0e2-section-29-appeal-application-form-for-an-appeal-against-refusal-to-admit-due.pdf and sent together with all supporting documents by registered post to the address on the form. As per the Department of Education and Youth's '*Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under section 29*', such an appeal may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

If an Applicant who seeks a review by the board of management is not satisfied with the decision of the board of management, that Applicant may also apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under section 29A of the Education Act 1998, as outlined in the immediately preceding paragraph.

8.3 Basis for a review by the board of management

As required by section 29C(2) of the Education Act 1998, any request for the board of management to review a decision of the school to refuse admission must be based on the implementation of this Admission Policy, the content of the school's Admission Notice and also set out the grounds of the request to review the decision.