

DONAHIES COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Pobalscoil na nDomhnaí



Streamville Road, Dublin 13 D13 YN77
Fón/Phone: 01-8473522 Faics/Fax: 01-8473653

Príomhoide/Principal: Peter Keohane Príomhoide Tánaisteach /Deputy Principal: Michelle Horrigan

DONAHIES COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Admission POLICY

Reviewed: August September 2025

Ratified by Board of Management: Sept 2025

Signed: Karl Nolan Date: 23.9.2025

Karl Nolan

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: Peter Keohane Date: 23.9.2025

Peter Keohane

Principal

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Donahies Community School

Admission Policy (September 2025)

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Admissions Policy to the Rogers Suite

Section A

Admission Policy of Donahies Community School Streamville Rd Dublin 13.

Roll number: 91318U

School Patrons: Archdiocese of Dublin & Dublin and Dún Laoghaire ETB

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

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron in September 2025. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Donahies Community School admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice, which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

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

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

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Donahies Community School is a modern, Co-educational Community School founded by The Department of Education in 1977. A Board of Management under the Trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Dublin (vested in the Sisters of St. Clare and the Marist Fathers) and Dublin, Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDETB), manages the school. Parents and Teaching staff also have representation on the Board of Management.

MISSION STATEMENT

At the Donahies Community School, we aim to carry the torch of learning to every member of the school community in an environment that is supportive and safe.

Our approach to education is holistic. Each student is supported to achieve his/her full academic potential. The Personal, Social and Spiritual development of all students is fostered and developed.

Our educational programmes reflect the inclusive nature of the school community. Our philosophy is based on respect, tolerance and understanding while appreciating the diversity of our changing world.

Ethos and Characteristic Spirit:

The founding intention of the Trustees challenges the school to be inclusive and cater for the educational needs of all students.

The values of DDLETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of XX Bishop and/or Religious Congregation and are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished. Within the context of the Department of Education and skills regulations and programmes, the rights of the Trustees/Board of Management as set out in the Education Act 1998 (section 15 (1), (2)), and the funding and resources available, the school supports the following principles:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs (recognised disability)
- Equality with respect to maximum access and participation in the school
- Parental/Guardian choice in relation to choice of school, having regard for the characteristic spirit of the school
- Respect for diversity of beliefs, languages, traditions and ways of life in society.

The characteristic spirit of our Trustees obliges the school to build on these values and principles. We endeavour to fulfil our mission in partnership with parents/guardians, staff, students, trustees and the local community.

Donahies Community School offers educational opportunities, through a wide range of subject options and a broad range of extra-curricular activities, in a fully equipped modern building.

These promote excellence, so that students can respond responsibly to their own lives and the lives of others.

Characteristic Spirit of a Community School under the joint patronage of Catholic and ETB Patrons

Donahies Community School is a co-educational multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of Dublin Arch Bishop, Marist fathers and sisters of St. Claire and Dublin and Dún Laoghaire ETB.

Donahies Community School provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the local community. An innovative approach to delivery of a wide-ranging curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental, physical and social well-being of students within their community. Community Schools may also provide for life-long learning within their local community through the provision of adult education programmes.

Our school was established under the Deed of Trust and opened on a green field site in 1977. The values of Donahies Community School as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of Archbishops house, and Marist fathers and sisters of St. Claire, and are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of Donahies Community School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. These values combine to provide and support an atmosphere which is conducive to excellence in teaching and learning. We endeavour to assist each student to reach his/ her full potential in a calm, caring and creative environment.

Our values are reflected in how we live as a school community. The unique and intrinsic value of each member of the school community is recognised and respected. All are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability, disability or socio-economic status. All students are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018) construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000. Once enrolled, our school (Donahies Community School) provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Donahies Community School provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, culture or background. Our school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society.

Our school is multi-denominational where we welcome, respect and support students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

In Donahies Community School, we celebrate the partnership, collaboration and empathy which nurtures and develops our young people in a community where the essence of our ethos is care and respect for self, others and our environment.

CREST and MOTTO

The Irish word Domhnach which means Sunday was the old word for church. The Donahies or na Domhnaigh means churches, as it was representing the site of an ancient abbey.

Our crest shows the churches, the Torch of Learning, which symbolises resurrection or new enlightened beginnings. The Rooster is a reminder of the very first year of the school, when classes took place in St Canices.

The school motto to 'Undertake and Accomplish' has remained the guiding principle since the foundation of the school.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

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

3. Admission Statement

Donahies Community School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Donahies Community School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), 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.

Donahies Community School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act."

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

Donahies Community School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established three special classes, to provide an education exclusively for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

The Rogers Suite

Donahies Community School has three classes catering for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with a maximum of six students in each (18 in total). The ASD classes (The Rogers Suite) named in honour of the contribution of one of the founding members of the school, Sr. Patricia Rogers, is established with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills. It provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister, and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Admissions Policy to The Rogers Suite is attached as Appendix A to this Policy

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#) below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Positive Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

Eligibility for Admission

- Students who have or have had a brother or sister in the school. Applications from parents of these pupils will be accepted subject to available places and application procedures being adhered to.
- Students who have completed sixth class in the primary schools of Holy Trinity Senior School, St Colmcilles, St Paul's Senior School, St Malachy's, St Eithne's, Our Lady Immaculate, Scoil Eoin, St. Benedict's, Belmayne, St. Francis of Assisi, and all primary schools within the Howth Deanery. All applications from parents of these pupils will be accepted subject to application procedures being adhered to.
- Students whose parents reside in the defined parishes of Holy Trinity, Ayrfield and Our Lady Immaculate, but whose child does not attend the schools listed above. All applications from parents of these pupils will be accepted subject to available places and application procedures being adhered to.
- Students living in the Howth Deanery as defined by the Archbishop of Dublin.
- Children of Staff at the Donahies Community School. Applications from staff will be accepted, subject to a suitable place being available and application procedures being adhered to.
- Post-primary school students must be aged 12 years on 1st January on the calendar year following entry into First year. Evidence of age, normally a Birth Certificate, will be required; a copy of which will be retained on the school records.

- Applications for 1st year must meet all the requirements of The Department of Education and Skills governing transfer from Primary to Post-Primary school.
- Students and parents must accept, in writing, the school Code of Positive Behaviour.

Procedures for Admission

- The school will normally organise an 'Open Night' and prepare a School Prospectus so that parents may inform themselves about the school. The Information Evening/Open Day is open to all eligible students for enrolment and the parents.
- For students whose primary school is within the Howth Deanery area, application is made by the completion of the Howth Deanery common application form. The Principal of each primary school within the Deanery will distribute these forms to 6th class students during the month of September/October. The form is returned to the primary school by the specified date. The primary school will send to the Deanery Secretary, who in turn will send the relevant applications to Donahies Community School.
- Students of 6th class, attending Our Lady Immaculate primary school will make direct application to the Donahies Community School as per the dates specified in the Admissions policy. Applications must be on or before the specified date.
- Applications are processed and parents, whose children meet the admission criteria, will be required to formally accept a place in the school by a date specified on the letter of notice.
- Students whose parents are resident in the parishes of Holy Trinity and Ayrfield, but attending Primary schools outside the Deanery, should make direct application to the school during as per dates in the admissions policy. The official application form and School Admissions Policy is available from the school office. Such applications will not be processed until students in Section 1 and 2 above have been accommodated.
- Late applications for 1st year, from students meeting the admission criteria, will be considered, depending on the availability of places at the time of application. Such applications should be made directly to the school.
- Parents should complete, sign and date the application form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents.
- Parents may (at a later date) be required to complete a further information form regarding their child's educational progress and/or to co-operate with the school's

attempts to identify the educational or other relevant needs of the child. The school may wish to meet with the applicant and her/his parent(s), to discuss the needs of the individual applicant or the parent(s), may request such a meeting.

- Failure to complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant documentation requested by the school or failure to make a reasonable arrangement to meet with the school authority to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

Decision Making Process:

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

All decisions on application for admission to Donahies Community School will be based on the following

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

Students with Special Education Needs

- The Donahies Community School strives to create an inclusive environment for all students, including those with additional needs. The school's ability to provide for students with special education needs is restricted to the resources made available to do so from the Department of Education & Skills. Applicants with Special Education Needs must meet the entry criteria set out for all students in this policy. The regular admissions procedures must also be adhered to. The existence of special education needs does not give an applicant a prioritised entry entitlement. The school's Special Needs Policy sets out how the school will,

- Take steps at an early stage to identify those children that enrolled at the school with special needs within the terms of the School Admissions Policy, and to become familiar with their particular educational needs.
- Request a copy of the child's medical/psychological report/individual educational plan, if available.
- Request assessment in order to assist the school in establishing educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.
- Request, in a timely manner, from the Department of Education and Science any additional resources deemed necessary e.g. Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport etc.
- Meet the parents/guardians to discuss the child's needs, the special staffing or equipment resources received by the school from the Department of Education and Science, to assist that child achieve their potential and the school's actual capacity to meet the child's needs.
- do all it possibly can to identify, plan, and provide for the needs of a child with special needs who is accepted as a student at the school under the terms of the admissions policy.
- Liase and dialogue with the SENO and NCSE to clarify on the resources for an individual student with SEN.

Right of Appeal:

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

6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

Selection criteria

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

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply: **Place will be decided by lottery**

Oversubscription. As the refusal to enrol is due to the school being oversubscribed, you may appeal this decision under section 29(1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998, as amended. In the first instance you must request a review by the board of management of the decision to refuse admission. This must be requested within 21 calendar days from the date of the decision to refuse admission to the school. A board of management request form (BOMR1) is 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-seek-a-review-by-the-board-of-management>. You can proceed to submit a section 29 appeal once you have received the outcome of the review by the board of management or once 42 calendar days have passed since the decision to refuse admission was made (whichever of these is the earliest). A section 29 appeal form can be downloaded 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>. Alternatively you can submit your appeal online and upload the required documentation at <https://www.section29appeals.gov.ie/>. A section 29 appeal must be made no later than 63 calendar days from the date of the decision to refuse admission.

Reasons other than oversubscription. As the refusal to enrol is for a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, you may appeal the decision under section 29(1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998, as amended. You may choose to request a review by the board of management of the decision to refuse admission. You are not obliged to, but if you choose to request a review you must request it within 21 calendar days from the date of the decision to refuse admission to the school. A board of management request form (BOMR1) is 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-seek-a-review-by-the-board-of-management>. If you do request a review by the board of management, you can proceed to submit a section 29 appeal once you have received the outcome of the review by the board of management or once 42 calendar days have passed since the decision to refuse admission was made (whichever of these is the earliest). A section 29 appeal form can be downloaded 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>. Alternatively you can submit your appeal online and upload the required documentation at <https://www.section29appeals.gov.ie/>. A section 29 appeal must be made no later than 63 calendar days from the date of the decision to refuse admission.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school; (other than in relation to a fee for a plc or further education and training course run by Donahies Community School in respect of those courses)
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to: admission to The Rogers Suite insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;

(f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; (See section 5)

(g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school, This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Donahies Community School will be based on the following:

- The school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

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

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

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

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

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

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Donahies Community 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 Donahies Community School where, it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.

- (i) 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.
- (ii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Positive Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iii) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [section 10](#) above.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a Patron or another Board of Management with a list of the students in relation to whom:

- (a) An application for admission to the school has been received
- (b) An offer of admission to the school has been made or
- (c) An offer of admission to the school has been accepted

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (a) The date on which an application for admission was received by the school
- (b) The date on which an offer of admission was made by the school
- (c) The date on which an offer of admission was accepted by the applicant
- (d) An applicant's personal details including name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005)

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Donahies Community School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Donahies Community School is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

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

14. Late Applications

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

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are

- not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group
- after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought,

are as follows

Admission of students transferring from another school

All such applications will be considered on an individual basis, subject to the availability of a place at the time of application. Application Forms are available from the school office on request. Applicants must fully complete this. Adherence to this Admissions Policy must be accepted.

Prior to enrolment applicants will be asked to

- Furnish full details of previous education details
- Provide copies of two most recent school reports
- Provide copies of state exam results
- Provide reference, if requested, from previous school
- Provide, where applicable, a current education psychological report

Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation listed above or to supply any other relevant documentation requested by the school may result in an applicant being refused admission to the school.

Applications will be accepted from students who meet the criteria of the department of Education and Skills and the school, a place is available, subject choice and class size are appropriate, and it is to the educational benefit of the student.

Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of ongoing disciplinary hearings in another school, which includes any ongoing statutory appeals procedures in accordance with The Education Act 1998 or The Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004.

The school reserves the right to refuse an application in circumstances, which might include but not exclusively confined to the following

- An established prior record of disruptive behaviour
- The application is not conducive to the spirit or culture of the school

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

The Board of Management of Donahies Community School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

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

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction, where the school offers Religious Education as distinct from Religious Instruction.

Donahies Community School offers *religious education* in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and in the spirit of the Deed of Trust. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, *religious education* supports the ‘multi-denominational’ aspect of our school’s ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or non-religious beliefs and those of their peers.

In this context it is important to understand the distinction between ‘*religious education*’ and ‘*religious instruction*’:

- *Religious education* is open to all pupils regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally.
- *Religious instruction* is instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a particular religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.

Given that Religious Education, as distinct from Religious Instruction, is timetabled across our school at all levels the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

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

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

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

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section B:

Appendix A

Admission Policy to The Rogers Suite

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

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

External Support Services

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

Pre-enrolment

Circular 0080/2024 sets out the measures to support the planning for special classes. The legal obligation of the school and the Board of Management to cooperate with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) is clear.

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

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

Parents should note that under the official DES guidelines, the number of student places available in the Rogers Suite is eighteen students. Three classes of six students in each. It should be noted that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily guarantee the student a place in the ASD class.

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

The Parents of the applicant must accept and agree to the Donahies Community School Code of Positive Behaviour and the terms of this policy

The ASD class at the Donahies Community School will only cater for children that are 12 years or more, and less than 18 years of age, on the 1st of September of the school year in question.

Enrolment

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

- Current students enrolled in the school
- Siblings of current students in DCS who apply
- Students where the primary recommendation is for a special class attached to a mainstream school
- applicant's resident within the defined school Catchment Area (see General Students Admission Policy) and attending
 - (1) the ASD classes in the feeder schools of Holy Trinity, Scoil Colmcille, Scoil Eoin and St Malachy's Boys National School, or
 - (2) attending the local feeder National Schools - St Paul's Senior National School, Our Lady Immaculate Senior National School, Scoil Eithne, St Benedict's National School, St Francis National School, Belmayne Educate Together National School and St Francis National School, Belmayne, St Josephs NS.
 - (3) applicants not attending the above named feeder schools but for whom The Rogers Suite would be nearest to their home residence.

Parents should note that where the number of applicants at any stage of the criteria numbered above exceeds the number of spaces available within that criterion, then the date of birth of the

applicant will be considered with priority being given to the oldest applicant and continuing thus forth until all places are filled. If two or more applicants share the same date of birth, then places will be allocated by lottery.

Application Process

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

This Enrolment Application Form should be accompanied by

- all the up to date and pertinent educational psychological assessments(s) and diagnostic report (s)
- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychological, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report)
- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports
- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same
- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.
- original Birth Certificate of the applicant
- School Reports and relevant documented information from all previous schools that the applicant attended.
- Proof of address is necessary.

Only applications that meet the criteria for enrolment, subject to available space and maximum student numbers, will be considered.

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

Students enrolled in an ASD class in another post-primary school will not be considered for transfer at the end of a school academic year unless the family have moved residence into the catchment area of the Donahies Community School.

The advice, support and recommendation of the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO), as per C0080/2024, for the area/region, based on the needs of the applicants, will be considered in the decision-making process associated with enrolment of applicants in the Rogers Suite.

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

- the applicant is deemed a risk, on health, safety, welfare or security grounds to themselves and/or others,
- admission of the applicant will make impossible, or have a serious detrimental effect on, the education provision by the Donahies Community School as an educational establishment of its services to others.

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

On acceptance of a place

- The Parents of a child being offered a place in the Rogers Suite will be invited to visit the school to meet with a member of the Special Education Team and the Principal/Deputy Principal of the school, to discuss the placement/enrolment of their child. Any information requested by the Parent will be provided at this meeting.
- The Parents may be requested to consent to a visit by a member of the Special Educational Needs professional staff at the Donahies Community School, to visit the existing school placement of the student concerned in order to observe the student in a classroom situation.
- The Parents will be invited to accompany their child to visit the Donahies Community School ASD Class and meet staff.
- The Parents may be consulted about the Education Plan for their child.
- The NEPS psychologist and SENO will be appraised of the Education Plan
- A child may be phased gradually into the special class in the ASD class through a mutually agreed process between Parents and the Management of the school.
- Where it is deemed appropriate, a student in the ASD Class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purpose by school management.

The placement of every student within The Rogers Suite will be subject to regular review, by school management, staff and where appropriate the professional services external to the school. This review may result in the student

- continuing within the ASD class at the Donahies Community School
- integrating fully into the mainstream post-primary
- being asked to seek an alternative and more appropriate placement for the student as the Donahies Community School is unable to meet the educational needs of the student.

In such an instance the support of the staff at The Donahies Community School will be available to assist the family in securing a more suitable learning environment, for the student concerned.

Code of Positive Behaviour

As already indicated above the parents of the applicant for enrolment must accept and agree to the Donahies Community School Code of Positive Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

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

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

Ratified by Board of Management on 23.9.2025

Signed:

Karl Nolan Chairperson Board of Management

Peter Keohane Principal/Secretary BOM
