

Belonging • Believing • Becoming

Admissions Policy 2027-2028

Ursuline College Sligo

Admissions Policy of Ursuline College 2027-2028

Finisklin, Sligo
65180T

School Patron: Le Chéile Schools Trust clg

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 on September 15th, 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Ursuline College's 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.

Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school Mission Statement

Ursuline College is a school where students are educated in partnership with parents in a Catholic and caring community; where each individual is respected as unique, where every aspect of the person is developed and where each one is prepared to take her place in society as a responsible citizen.

2. Ethos

Ursuline College strives to enable students to:

- Be aware of God's unconditional love for them.
- Know and live their Catholic faith through learning, liturgy, prayer and practice.
- Be active members of their community and church.
- Develop and love their cultural heritage while also appreciating and respecting the cultural differences of others.
- Be aware of others less fortunate than themselves and respond accordingly.
- Be independent of mind in order to stand up for the truth.

Ursuline educators strive that all students would:

- Be active participants in their own learning.
- Reach their academic potential.
- Develop creativity in their use of leisure.
- Develop active enquiring minds, powers of discrimination, self-discipline and leadership skill.
- Be responsible guardians of our planet.

Ursuline College is a Catholic all girls voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of Le Chéile Schools Trust.

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

Our school seeks to build a learning community that welcomes, and witnesses to, the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the Le Chéile Charter. The school draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past and the charism of St. Angela Merici, the foundress of the Ursuline Congregation. Ursuline education seeks to nurture a community where Christian values are respected, lived and taught.

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

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

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Ursuline College shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron/or so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

<u>The general objectives of all Le Chéile schools include:-</u>

Welcome: recognises the unique dignity and worth of each person.

Wisdom: is the pursuit of a greater understanding and appreciation of the world.

Witness: comes from the expression of Gospel values, in everyday life, and recognises that every person is made in the image and likeness of God.

3. Admission Statement

Ursuline College will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

(a) the gender of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned.
(b) the civil status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned.
(c) the family status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned.
(d) the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned.
(e) the religion of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned.
(f) The disability of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned.
(g) the 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.
(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.

Ursuline College will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Ursuline College will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4) (b).

Ursuline College is an all-girls school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school.

Ursuline College is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of the Catholic faith in preference to others.

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

Ursuline College is an inclusive school and welcomes students of all abilities. The school embraces the principle of equality of access and seeks to help all its' students reach their academic potential and develop their unique gifts and talents.

Ursuline College recognises each pupil as a unique individual with different talents and needs. We endeavour to meet their physical, intellectual and emotional needs through our student focused programmes. Ursuline College promotes and facilitates a whole school approach to special educational needs and so creates a community of learning

In fostering an atmosphere of learning that is holistic in approach, we nurture each student's personal growth and development. We promote autonomous learning and strive to enable all to achieve their full potential.

Students with special educational needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the DES and/or NCSE. Upon confirmation of admission into the School, parents of students with special educational needs are requested to arrange a meeting with the SEN Coordinator, where the student has previously been assessed or has received Resource or Learning Support classes or in the case of care needs or SEN supports arising from medical conditions. This facilitates advance planning for providing support for a student with special educational needs and easing the transition from primary to secondary school or transition between schools. Supports provided to students are based on identified needs and are subject to review of progress in consultation with parents and students as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.

The principal aim of our Educational Provision for Students with Additional Learning Needs Policy is to enable students with Special Educational Needs to access, participate and benefit from our Ursuline Education to the fullest extent possible and to do so in an

inclusive learning environment which respects the dignity of all students and facilitates the development of a truly inclusive school.

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 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.

c) Ursuline College provides education exclusively for girls and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

d) Ursuline College is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

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:

1. A sister or sisters of the applicant is/are attending or has/have attended this school.
2. The applicant is a daughter of a current staff member of Ursuline College.
3. The applicant's mother attended this school and completed her Leaving Certificate here, (subject to the 25% rule).
4. Applicants are attending local feeder schools, e.g. Scoil Ursula.
5. Other applicants.

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:

In this case, the places will be allocated by a lottery/random selection. This will be carried out by an independent observer appointed by the Board of Management.

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 contributions to the school;

(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;

(d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
(e) a requirement that a student, 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 other than:
(1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or
(2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

(g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school;

This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned.
This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2027 only).

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Ursuline College will be based on the following:

- Our school's Admission Policy.
- 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 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 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.

8. 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Ursuline College, you must indicate –

(i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and are 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

10. 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 Ursuline College where-

(i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
(ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
(iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student.
(iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section10 above.

11. 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 data 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-

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

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

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

The list may include any or all of the following:

(i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;

(ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;

(iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;

(iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

12. Waiting list in the event of over subscription

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

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

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

13. 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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

14. Procedures for admission of students to a year group other than 1st Year and/or to any year group during the school year.

Where parents wish to make an application for their daughter to a year group other than 1st Year or during the school year, they should in the first instance fill in an Application Form. An offer of a place can only be made if there is space in the year group in question. A decision on whether a place can be offered will be conveyed to the parents within 21 days of the initial application. Applications made for a place in Transition Year or 5th Year in the forthcoming academic year will be deferred until the Principal has established the number of available spaces in each of these year groups, which will depend, in turn, on the number of existing 3rd Year students who progress to either year group. Such applications will be placed on a waiting list until the number of available places in the relevant year group has been established by the Principal.

Before accepting the offer of a place in the school, the parents and their daughter may be invited to attend a meeting with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal to ascertain

whether there is a place available in the particular subject classes required by their daughter. The fact that there may be a space in a year group would not automatically mean that there is a place available in a particular subject class at the level required by the student. This is because class size is limited in certain subjects. For this reason, parents and their daughter are strongly recommended to attend a meeting with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal to ensure that a transfer to the school would be in the best interests of their daughter given the curricular provision, subject choices/levels available at the time.

15. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant to a year group other than 1st Year or during the school year:

The parents must confirm their acceptance in writing of an offer of a place within three weeks of the date of the offer of a place.

In accepting an offer of admission from Ursuline College, the parents must indicate-

(i) whether or not they have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If they have accepted such an offer, they must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not they have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, they must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

Parents should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

16. Circumstances in which offers of a place in a year group other than 1st Year or during the school year may not be made or may be withdrawn:

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Ursuline college where-

(i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading;
(ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission within three weeks of the date of the offer of a place;
(iii) the parent of a student, when required by the Principal in accordance with section
(iv) 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such

code by the student;

(v) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out above;

(vi) the application is made for a place in Transition Year or 5th Year in the forthcoming academic year **before** the Principal has established the number of available spaces in each of these year groups, which will depend on the number of existing 3rd Year students who progress to either year.

17. Oversubscription to the year group other than 1st Year:

In the event of there being more applications to the year group other than 1st Year than places available, a waiting list of students, whose application for admission to the particular year group has been refused, will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list will be in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy see **Section 6** above. If there are two or more students in any of the selection criteria categories set out in **Section 6** above, then the position on the waiting list (for places in a year group other than 1st year) will be determined by a lottery process overseen by the Principal, Deputy Principal and an independent observer appointed by the Board of Management.

Offers of any subsequent places in the year group other than First Year that become available during the school year 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.

18. Sharing of Data with other schools:

Applicants should note that the provisions of **Section 12** above relating to the sharing of data with other schools will apply in all cases where an application is made to a year group other than 1st Year or during the school year.

Applicants should be aware that ***section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018*** allows for the sharing of data 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-

(i) an application for admission to the school has been received,

(ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or

(iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

(i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;

(ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;

(iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;

(iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

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

The Board of Ursuline College or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with ***section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018***, seek payment of contributions 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.

20. 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, have 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:

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Ursuline College without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will be then be arranged with the parent/guardian or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request might be accommodated by the school.

21. 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 (l)(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 (l)(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.

Signed:*		Date: 3/11/2026

Chairperson of the board of management

Signed:*	Colm McGuire	Date: 03/11/2026

Principal/Secretary to the board of management