

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR ADMISSION TO DE LA SALLE COLLEGE WATERFORD IN 2018-2019

SECTION 1: PROFILE, TRADITION, MISSION AND ETHOS

1.1 College Profile

De La Salle College is an All Boys' Voluntary Catholic Secondary School, operating under the Trusteeship of the Le Chéile Schools Trust, a Catholic Schools Trust. The College is managed by the Board of Management, is funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and operates within the regulations and guidelines set down from time to time by that Department. The school seeks extra funding in the form of an annual school charge from parents on an annual basis in order to supplement D.E.S. funding. The College has an active Parents' Council and Students' Council.

1.2 Mission Statement

De La Salle College, Waterford is a Catholic school. It is a learning community where all students are valued and educated in preparation for a meaningful life.

1.3 Ethos

De La Salle College, Waterford was founded in 1891 by the De La Salle Brothers and serves as a Catholic school for boys. The aim of De La Salle College is to develop an atmosphere of friendliness, discipline and co-operation where everyone can experience respect, encouragement and support. While every school is a community in which adults and young people live and work together, the Lasallian school is inspired by the vision of St. John Baptist De La Salle that Gospel values must permeate the life of a Christian school in such a way that students internalise those values and reflect them in their behaviour.

All who work in the College constantly strive to make De La Salle College a welcoming institution. Our behaviour management strategies and pastoral care structures are built on the principles of justice and fairness. We endeavour to fulfil our mission in partnership with parents/guardians, staff, students, trustees and the community.

SECTION 2- COLLEGE, CURRICULUM AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

2.1 Introduction

De La Salle College aims, with the resources available, to provide the best possible environment in order to cater for the cultural, educational, moral, physical, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions of all students. We show special concern for the disadvantaged and we make every effort to ensure that the uniqueness and dignity of each person is respected and responded to, especially through the pastoral care system in the College. We realise too, that we must cater for the changing needs of today's world and towards that end, we frequently review our various programmes. Being keenly aware of the ever-increasing effect of outside influences on the lives of our students, we are even more concerned to maintain Christian values and practices.

Within the context of the DES regulations and programmes, the rights of the Trustees and Board of Management as set out in the Education Act 1998 (Section 15 (1), (2)), and the funding and resources available the College supports the following principles:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs.
- Equality with respect to access to and participation in education and to promote the means whereby students benefit from education.
- Parental choice in relation to choice of school, having regard for the ethos of the school.
- Respect for the diversity of beliefs, languages, traditions and ways of life in society.

The founding intention of the Trustees challenges the College to be inclusive, and cater for all the educational needs of the students whose enrolment has been accepted at the school. It challenges the College to be truly an educational resource for the community it serves, and to be mindful of local educational needs and to focus on the importance of a value-based, Lasallian education. The ethos of the De La Salle Brothers and the Le Chéile Schools Trust obliges the school to build on these values and principles and provides the context for the mission of the school, the school plan, its operating policies and the day to day work of the school.

2.2 The College

De La Salle College accepts all students that apply for enrolment to the school that qualify for admission under the criteria outlined in this policy as agreed by the Board of Management and the school Trustees. In addition, admission is subject to the resources available to the school including physical classroom accommodation, class size, teaching and financial resources and is also subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the educational needs of those who apply for admission. Where the College lacks the necessary resources to meet the educational needs of any applicant, it will make every effort to secure those resources from the DES. Where the resources cannot be secured then the Board of Management reserves the unfettered right to refuse admission.

The implementation of the curriculum, the pastoral care programme, the school development plan and school policy have due regard to the resources and funding available. The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Minister for Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

2.3 Curriculum

The school usually offers the following educational programmes:

- Three year Junior Certificate Schools Programme
- Three year Junior Certificate Programme
- One year Transition Year Programme
- Two Year Traditional Leaving Certificate Programme
- Two Year Leaving Certificate Applied Programme

The Board of Management reserves the right to discontinue some programmes in years where the resources and /or numbers do not allow for their effective and efficient delivery.

2.4 Extra Curricular Activities

Students attending the school are given the opportunity and encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities made available to them from time to time and which to date include: Athletics, Basketball, Debating, Public Speaking, Gaelic Football, Soccer, Hurling, Rugby, Golf, Cricket, Swimming, Equestrian events, Chess, Young Scientist, Creative Writing, Mentoring programmes, Drama, Musical etc. Adventure, Educational and Social School tours are a frequent feature of school life in De La Salle College.

2.5 Funding

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Skills and it operates within the regulations (circulars) laid down from time to time by the D.E.S. At all times, the implementation of the school plan and school policies must have regard to the resources and funding available. The school seeks extra funding in the form of an annual school charge from parents in order to supplement D.E.S. funding. In 2018-2019 the Annual School Charge is €100 per student. The Board of Management reserves the right to vary the charge at any time. This charge covers locker, school journal, attendance software, student accident insurance and administration costs including text notifications, report costs etc.

SECTION 3: SCOPE, RATIONALE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Scope

This document sets out the policy of the College in respect of admissions (enrolment) to the College in the following circumstances:

- Students applying for a place in First Year for the academic year 2018-2019 (See Section 5)
- Students applying to transfer from another second-level school to De La Salle College, Waterford (See Section 6)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College aims and policies which may be viewed on the De La Salle College website - www.delasallewaterford.com:

After classes end each school day, the College is open only to those students who are present at supervised activities approved by the College Authorities.

SECTION 4: COLLEGE DETAILS

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Address: Newtown, Waterford
Telephone: 051 875294
Fax: 051 841321
E-mail: admin@delasallewaterford.ie
Web Site: www.delasallewaterford.com

SECTION 5: PROCEDURES - ADMISSION CRITERIA, ADMISSION, DECISION AND APPEAL MECHANISM

5.1 Admission Procedures for Students for Entry into First Year 2018-2019

Parents/Guardians should note the right to decide the numbers entering the different programmes each year rests entirely with the Board of Management of De La Salle College, Waterford.

1. Application must be made by the completion of the De La Salle College Waterford Application Form which is enclosed with the information pack distributed at the College Open Night or from the College Office thereafter.
2. Applications are processed during the months of September and October of the school year prior to the student's entry to the College.
3. A positive attitude towards, school work, behaviour, attendance and punctuality is required of students enrolled at the College. Students and parents/guardians must be willing to accept, in writing, the school's Code of Behaviour. Acceptance of a place in the College will be on the basis of the acceptance by parents/guardians of all other policies as sanctioned and adopted by The Board of Management
4. Applications for First Year must meet all the requirements of the DES governing the transfer of students from Primary to Post-Primary school.
5. All applicants must sit the school Assessment Test, the date of which will be communicated in writing to the parents/guardians of the students accepted for enrolment at the College.
6. The College operates an annual school charge of €100 each year per student. The school endeavours at all times to provide a good all-round education for every pupil in a good physical and moral environment.
7. Parents/Guardians of students enrolled at the De La Salle College, Waterford are requested to work in partnership with the school and support where at all possible all College activities.

This Admissions Policy was prepared within the context of:

- the parameters of all guidelines, regulations and programmes currently made available by the DES and/ or by the Le Chéile Schools Trust
- the funding and resources currently made available to the College by the DES and any other sources.

When dealing with admissions, the College seeks to fulfil the above goals in the following manner, namely to allocate the number of places available:

- on the basis of its mission as a Roman Catholic School in the Lasallian tradition
- on the basis of supporting the family ethos within education by providing education services for the children of families who already have, or have recently had, a brother of the applicant attend the College for his post primary education and for the children of eligible staff
- to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students attending primary schools within its own locality or demographic area, including students with disability and special educational needs, in accordance with the resources provided by the DES and otherwise available to it.

Parents/Guardians seeking admission of their children to the College are invited to carefully read this Policy and to recognise that this Policy sets out –

- The kind of College and education to which they are seeking to admit their child, particularly in relation to its Catholic and Lasallian ethos

- The basis of dealing with their application to enrol

Accordingly, Parents/Guardians in completing their application to enrol a student at the College are asked -

- to duly recognise and commit themselves accordingly on their own part (and on behalf of their son) to the College Catholic and Lasallian Ethos and Mission Statement in the event that their son is admitted as a student to the College
- to duly recognise and accept this policy as the basis for treating their son's application for admission to the College.

The Board of Management will determine the number of students to be accepted into First Year - that figure will depend on the overall number of students in the College, the overall capacity for which the College was designed, the capacity of the College to fulfil its obligations under educational programmes currently in progress, the approved teaching resources and the class size limitations which are predetermined by the Board of Management.

5.2 Class Size

In deciding the number of students to be enrolled in any class, educational programme or in any school year, the Board of Management has adopted a policy on the maximum numbers of students to be accommodated in any class group conscious of the available classroom space, the level of equipment available for student use in that subject area, sound educational practices, opportunity for student achievement, special needs facilities, good order, grade and level of subject area, health, safety and welfare of students and staff, and a desire for an on-going calm industrial relations climate in the school.

5.3 School Size and Number to be admitted in the Academic Year 2018-2019

For the Academic Year 2018-2019, the Board of Management has decided that there will be either:

- 7 classes of 28 students plus one viable class for Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP) or
- If there are an insufficient number of students for the JCSP class to be viable, there will be 8 classes of 27 students.

Once a student accepts a place in a particular programme, his commitment to that programme is required for the three years.

5.4 Students eligible for admission to First Year -

- must be male
- must have reached the required age of 12 on the 1st January in the calendar year following the child's entry into First Year
- must have completed Sixth class in Primary School
- must follow all the steps in the admission process
- must, in conjunction with their parents/guardians, to accept the College Ethos
- must, with parents/guardians, accept the College Code of Behaviour, practices, procedures and all other published College policies (see website)
- must sit the College Assessment Test, the date of which will be communicated in writing to the parents/ guardians of the students accepted for enrolment at the College
- must complete the detailed student information forms

Parents/Guardians should complete and sign the Application Form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will not be processed and may be returned to parents/guardians. When an application form, properly completed, is received by the College it will be stamped with the date on which it was received.

Decisions regarding student admissions are a matter for the Board of Management. However, this task is normally delegated to the Principal who decides on such matters in accordance with the terms of the College Admissions Policy. The Principal may refer any application to the Board of Management for final decision.

5.5 Student Assessment

An assessment of incoming newly enrolled students will take place at a date which is notified to parents/guardians of children accepted for admission to De La Salle College. All pupils who have been allocated a place shall be obliged to sit for the College's assessment. A student candidate, who fails to sit for the assessment test without good reason, as judged by the College Board of Management, supported by appropriate documentation, may put their admission to the College at risk. The Board of Management may decide to revoke an earlier decision to admit such a student and to offer the place to a student applicant on a College waiting list.

The Assessment Test will be used help the College to identify whether a student may have special educational needs and the results may be used as a basis for seeking additional teaching or other resources from the DES, in line with the Special Educational Needs Policy of the College. The Assessment Test will be used to guide the College in its assignment of students to mixed ability classes

5.6 Application for First Year

The closing date for receipt of completed Application Forms for First Year for the academic year 2018-2019 is 3.10 p.m. on Friday 29th September 2017.

Places are allocated as soon as possible but not later than 21 days after the closing date. Where a student is refused admission to the school their parents/guardians will be advised, in writing, of their right to appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the DES under the terms of DES Circular letter M48/01. Such an appeal must normally be made within 42 days of notification of the College's decision to refuse a place.

5.7 Allocation of Places in First year 2018-2019

Places in 1st year will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria in the order listed below:

- Category A: Brothers (or foster-brothers) of students currently attending De La Salle College, Waterford and brothers of eligible past-pupils of De La Salle College, Waterford. Eligible past-pupil is defined as those past-pupils who have completed at least two years in De La Salle College, Waterford.
- Category B: Sons of current eligible staff of De La Salle College, Waterford. Eligible staff is defined as those non-casual employees who have been in the employment of the Board of Management of the College for at least one year and who are reasonably expected to be still employed by the Board at the time their son commences in De La Salle College, Waterford.
- Category C: Students from the following feeder De La Salle and St. Joseph & St. Benildus Parish primary schools: St Stephen's, St Declan's, Gaelscoil Phort Láirge and Ballygunner N.S .
- Category D: All other applicants.

If the maximum number of enrolments is reached at any one of the stated ordered criteria above, then the places will be offered in that category on a random basis. The remaining names in that category will be placed on a numbered Waiting List, using the same random process to determine the order of names on this Waiting List. In the event that a place becomes available, through cancellation or other cause, the place will be offered to parents/guardians on the Waiting List in number order as determined by the random process.

5.8 The random process and the waiting list:

The random process that will be used, if there are more Application Forms in any of the above categories than places available in that category, will be overseen by the Principal or Deputy Principal and will be witnessed by a representative of the Board of Management and an independent Peace Commissioner or member of An Garda Síochána. The name of each student in the relevant category entitled to participate in this random process will be placed in a drum. In all cases, when this random process is being conducted, applications received on behalf of twins, triplets, or sons from the same family unit will be treated as one applicant. This will neither increase nor reduce the chances of any applicant being offered a place. The Principal will draw names from the drum, one by one, until the drum is empty. The order in which the names are drawn from the drum will be recorded on a numbered list. Places will be offered in the order in which names are drawn from the drum until available places are filled. The remaining names on the list will be placed on a numbered Waiting List in the order in which the names were drawn from the drum.

The names on any late Application Forms will then be added to the end of the Waiting List in date order of receipt in the office.

As soon as it is practicable the Board of Management will make the decision in respect of all applications and inform parents/guardians in writing at the address specified on the application form. Parents/Guardians will also be ad-vised in writing of the appeal mechanisms open to them should their application to enrol their son at the College be unsuccessful

Application Forms are available from the College Office (051) 875294 from 19th September 2017 and will be made available and distributed to those parents/guardians who attend the College Open Night / Information Evening on Monday 18th September 2017 between 6.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. or 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Late applications will only be considered for admission to the College after all applications received on time have been fully processed.

Successful applicants should note that

- a meeting between parents/guardians, student and a staff member may be arranged, on a specified date, where the individual needs of the student may be discussed and addressed
- the College authority also may contact Sixth Class teachers in each of the feeder Primary Schools for any further relevant information, to help complete the student profile
- parents/guardians should note that the assignment of a student to a particular class group at De La Salle College Waterford is a matter for the Principal alone, subject to the direction of the College Board of Management

5.9 Board of Management's Right to allocate Discretionary Places in Exceptional Compassionate Circumstances:

Notwithstanding the procedures for allocating places set out above, the Board of Management reserves the right to allocate a place or places, up to a limit of three places, to students in exceptional compassionate circumstances. If a parent/guardian believes that their son may qualify for such a place then the following procedures will apply:

1. The Application Form must be completed and returned to the College office by 3.10 p.m. on 29th September 2017.
2. The parent/guardian must set out in writing the exceptional compassionate grounds that are relevant. This written submission must be accompanied by at least one of the following:
 - a. a letter from the Principal of the Primary School that the son is attending
 - b. a letter from a medical doctor
 - c. a letter from a member of the clergy.

The purpose of this letter is to support the facts contained in the submission.

3. The submission and all supporting documentation must be received by the College not later than 3.10 p.m. on 29th September 2017. If it is being posted to the College, it should be posted in time to reach the College by 3.10 p.m. on 29th September 2017 and proof of posting should be retained. The submission should quote the unique number on the Application Form, even if it accompanies the Application Form. The parents/guardians should receive an acknowledgement from the school by Monday 2nd October 2017.. They should contact the school immediately if they have not received such an acknowledgement.
4. The submission will be considered by a special committee comprising of the College Principal or Deputy Principal, the Chaplin or member of the College R.E. Department and one of the Guidance Counsellors. This committee will make a recommendation to the Board of Management, before the random process, who will then decide whether or not to allocate a discretionary place from the 212 places available in 2018-2019.
5. If the Board of Management decides to allocate a discretionary place the parents/guardians will be notified, at the same time as all other parents, that their son has been allocated a place after the completion of the random process. If their son is not allocated a discretionary place then the application will be treated as all other applicants in the appropriate category. In the event that no place is allocated after the completion of the random process the parents/guardians will be informed of their right to appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the DES under the terms of DES Circular letter No. M48/01.

5.10 Board of Management's Right to Refuse Admission

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could include the following:

1. The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education or
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.

5.11 Appeals to Board of Management

The final decision with regard to the enrolment of students in De La Salle College, Waterford and with regard to all matters covered by this Admissions Policy lies with the Board of Management.

Parents/Guardians whose son has not been allocated a place in the College may appeal this decision in the first instance to the Board of Management and subsequently, if necessary, to the Department of Education and Skills, under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998).

Appeals will be determined by the Board of Management in the light of all the facts presented to it and having due regard to:

- The Admissions Policy
- The established practices within the College for dealing with issues /grievances which are the subject matter of the appeal, including where relevant and available, any statutory or non-statutory procedures, guidelines, regulations or other provisions in operation at anytime
- The educational interests of the student who is the subject of the appeal
- The educational interests of all other students in the College
- The effective operation and management of the College
- Any resource implications arising from the issues under appeal
- Such other matters, as the Board of Management considers relevant.

The appeal to the Department of Education and Skills must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians. The Appeals Application Form can be downloaded from the website: www.education.ie or obtained from the school office.

SECTION 6: TRANSFER OF A STUDENT INTO THE COLLEGE FROM ANOTHER SECOND-LEVEL SCHOOL

It is the policy of the Board of Management not to accept transfer applications from students already enrolled in a Waterford City post-primary school during the academic year 2018-2019. This policy is required due to the short-age of specialist rooms, the size of a number of general classrooms and the health and safety concerns caused by the existing congestion on school corridors.

Transfer applications from schools outside the Waterford City area will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

In such cases where a transfer application to our school may be considered, admission of the student will be subject to the following conditions

- Completion of the appropriate Application Form available from the school office
- Compliance with the Admission Policy of our school
- In the best interest of the school community
- Suitability of our curriculum provision
- Availability of subject choice

- Availability of space in class or year group
- In the best interest of the student e.g. consequences of midterm transfer
- Is of educational benefit to the student
- That all-relevant information from the former school is made available e.g. disciplinary and attendance record, special needs, as per Section 20 of the Education (Welfare Act) 2000
- Consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer if necessary
- The school being satisfied with the reason for the transfer.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for admission in accordance with the school's admission policy.

SECTION 7: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

In welcoming applications from students with special educational needs, the College will use the resources, (finance and personnel) provided by the DES, to make reasonable provision and accommodation for all such students and will ensure that these students are free to participate in the life of the College in so far as is reasonably practicable. While recognising and fully supporting parents'/guardians' right to have a school of their choice for their children, the College's ability to provide for students with particular educational needs are dependent on resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the DES. College authorities and parents/guardians must co-operate, from the earliest possible time, to identify and establish the special educational needs of the student, the resources required to meet those needs and the submission of a well researched request to the DES or its agencies seeking the allocation of appropriate resources.

De La Salle College, Waterford strives to create an inclusive environment for students with special needs, unless the nature and degree of those needs is such that to enrol the student concerned would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and/or the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated.

The College's ability to provide for such students is restricted to the resources made available to do so from the DES. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the College well in advance of the admissions process should they feel that their son has special education need, as considerable delays have been experienced by schools in receiving a response from the DES, to a request submitted to it for special resources.

Applicants with special 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 needs requirements does not give any individual applicant any prioritised entry entitlement.

The school will -

- take steps at an early stage to identify those children that enrolled at the College with special needs with-in the terms of the College 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 or
- request an immediate NEPS assessment, in order to assist the College in identifying educational and training needs of the child relevant to his disability or special needs and to profile the support services required
- request, in a timely manner from the DES, any additional resources deemed necessary e.g. Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, special transport arrangements etc.
- meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss their needs, the special staffing or equipment resources received by the College from the DES, to assist that child achieve their full potential and the College's actual capacity to meet the identified needs

- through the Board of Management, do all it possibly can to identify, plan, and provide for the particular needs of a special needs or disabled child who is accepted as a student at the College under the terms of the admissions policy.

In making provision for special educational needs students the question arises as to whether the student has access to any special resources currently at primary school level –

- Special Needs Assistant or Classroom Assistant
- Special class
- Help, for specific needs, from any Resource or Learning Support teacher
- Assistance with behaviour modification
- Psychological assessment. (Report to be provided)
- Any additional resources to help with his special needs
- Help in areas including visual impairment, hearing impairment, general learning disability or emotional disturbance
- Access to any specialist equipment
- Any resource in relation to travel or mobility etc.

If an expert report is provided, it should, where possible, include a workable strategy for addressing the student needs, allowing for the resources available.

Management at the College, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of the special needs student can be best met.

The College commits itself to working closely with the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) and in ensuring students with special needs are given every assistance possible, subject to available resources to achieve their educational potential.

SECTION 8: APPEALS

The final decision with regard to the enrolment of students in De La Salle College, Waterford and with regard to all matters covered by this Admissions Policy lies with the Board of Management.

Parents/Guardians whose son has not been allocated a place in the College may appeal this decision in the first instance to the Board of Management and subsequently, if necessary, to the Department of Education and Skills, under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998).

The appeal to the Department of Education and Skills must normally be made within 42 calendar days from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians. The Appeals Application Form can be downloaded from the website: www.education.ie or obtained from the school office.

SECTION 9: IMPORTANT DATES FOR ADMISSION INTO FIRST YEAR 2018-2019

- Monday 18th September 2017 – Open Night for Parents / Guardians / Prospective Students
- Friday 29th September 2017 3.10 p.m. – Closing date and time for receipt of completed Application Forms and supporting documentation
- Entrance Assessment for students who have accepted an allocated place for First Year 2018-2019 to be confirmed

SECTION 10: REVIEW

This policy covers applications for the academic year 2018-2019. It will be reviewed by the Board of Management during the calendar year 2018 for admission in future academic years.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 7th September 2017.

