

St. Mary's National School

Enrolment Policy

St. Mary's N.S is a Roman Catholic co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Bishop of Kilmore, Dr. Leo O Reilly.

As a Roman Catholic School, the school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all pupils cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The school caters for the full range of classes from Junior Infants to sixth class. It is an inclusive school and caters for children of all abilities. There are 6 full time teachers, including the principal and 1 resource / learning support teachers. A Special Needs Assistant is assigned to the school by the Department of Education and Science to enable the inclusion of certain children with special education needs.

St. Mary's N.S operates under the Rules for National Schools and Departmental Circulars and is funded by grants. Staff are resourced by the Department of Education and Science. The school is subject to The Education (Admission to schools) Act 2018, The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004) equality law and all other relevant legislation. Dominican Primary Schools follow the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Science.

The Admissions Policy

The Admissions Policy has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and The Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 in order to assist Parents in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

Application Procedure

Application forms are available in the school office. Parents seeking to enrol children should return a completed application form with an original birth/ adoption certificate to the school. Parents of children enrolled in Junior Infants will be invited to a meeting in the school in June each year.

Children will be enrolled on application provided that there is space available.

Junior Infants are enrolled in September provided the child has reached his / her 4th birthday. Normally, Junior Infants will not be enrolled during the year unless transferring from another school. This is for education reasons as the curriculum is progressive and it is necessary for the child to complete a full year.

Decisions in relation to application for enrolment are made by the Board of Management.

Parents will be informed of acceptance of the child to the school as soon as possible

No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language / accent, gender, traveller status, asylum-seeker / refugee status, religious / political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances.

The completion of an application form or the placement of your child's name on a list, however early, does not confer an automatic right to a place in the school.

Children enrolled in the St. Mary's N.S, are required to co-operate with and support the school's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies. Parents / Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with these policies in an age-appropriate way. A copy of the Code of Behaviour will be issued to all parents and each parent will be requested to sign an undertaking to uphold the school Code of Behaviour.

In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment exceeding the number of places available the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment:

1. Brothers and sisters of children already enrolled (including step siblings, resident at same address).
2. Children who live within the parish boundaries.
3. Children of staff in the school.
4. In the event of being unable to enrol children in any year, the child's name will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the criteria as above.

Other pupils may be enrolled during the school year if newly resident in the area. Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools who are newly resident in the area are enrolled subject to the Rules for National Schools, Education Welfare Act and school's enrolment policy.

Decision making

The Board of Management determines the maximum number of children in the school based on the Department of Education's recommended enrolment at the time.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special educational needs are welcome to enrol in the school and every effort will be made to provide them with an appropriate education as well as to include them in every aspect of school life. The child enrolling in St. Mary's N.S will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management may request copies of relevant reports or request that the child be assessed immediately in order to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child and to profile the support services required. The Board of Management will endeavour to have all resources and supports in place before the child is admitted to the school. This may include visiting teacher service, resource teacher, special needs assistants etc, specialized equipment or furniture, transport services etc.

The school will meet with the parent of the special needs child to discuss the school's suitability for the child. If considered necessary, a full case conference may be called which will include parents, class teacher, learning support teacher, resource teacher and psychologist or social workers as appropriate.

Children of other faiths or no faith

Bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made so that the school is as inclusive as possible. While Catholic education and the ethos of the school permeates the day, children of other faiths or none, where request is made in writing, will be excused from attendance at formal religious instruction classes and specifically Catholic liturgies. As far as is possible, in consultation with parents, suitable alternative arrangements will be made in order to facilitate this. It will not be possible however to provide religious instruction in other faiths.

In line with Section 28 of the Education Act 1998, parents who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed, in writing to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal, and lodged within ten days of receiving

the refusal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act on the official form provided by the Department. An appeal form will be issued by the school to the parents/ guardians. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of the refusal from the school to enrol.

This Policy was completed and made ready for the school plan in 2018.

This Policy was discussed at the Board of Management meeting and ratified in February 2019.

Date for next review: Autumn 2020 (unless circumstances deem a sooner review date necessary)

Signed _____ Date _____
(Chairperson, Board of Management)