



## **St. John the Apostle, Knocknacarra NS**

### **Enrolment & Admissions Policy 2019**

#### **Introduction**

The Enrolment & Admissions Policy (hereafter called “the policy”) was drawn up in consultation with the staff, parents and the Board of Management (BoM) of St. John the Apostle, Knocknacarra NS (hereafter called “the school”). The policy of the school is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998) and the Education Act 2018. The BoM trusts that the policy will inform and assist parents/guardians in the process of enrolling their child(ren). The Chairperson of the BoM and the Principal will clarify any queries parents/guardians may have relating to the policy. Any matters arising will be dealt with by the BoM.

St John the Apostle is a Catholic school for boys and girls from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class and is under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, Bishop Brendan Kelly.

#### **Policy Considerations**

The policy is based on the principles of:

- inclusiveness, particularly with reference to children with disabilities and/or special needs
- equality of access and participation in the school
- parental choice in relation to enrolment and
- respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages in the community

Therefore, no child will be refused admission to the school for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, accent, language, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values, family or social circumstances.

In determining its Policy the BoM has taken account of:

- (i) the design of the school building which facilitates two classes at each level
- (ii) Department of Education & Skills guidance regarding class size. Currently the recommended number of children per mainstream class teacher is 26 for the 2018/19 school year
- (iii) the educational needs and rights of children already enrolled, multi-grade classes and the presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs and
- (iv) the Health, Safety and Welfare of children and school staff

#### **Policy Aims**

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school;

- to comply with the relevant legislation affecting the policy primarily The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004) the Education Act 2018 and relevant equality legislation
- to ensure that all children have equal right to an education in an atmosphere that is supportive of their physical, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development
- to make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner, consistent with its ethos, the mission statement of the school and legislative requirements
- to make an accurate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in light of its available resources
- to develop an effective relationship between children, parents and school staff.

## **Communication Procedures re Applications**

The BoM is committed to openness and transparency in relation to this Policy. All applications will be acknowledged within 10 working days on receipt of application. It will, also, outline the process to be followed. Further letters (emails) will issue as outlined in the Policy. If at any stage you are not satisfied with any enrolment decisions made, you can appeal the decision firstly to the BoM and subsequently by a Section 29 Appeal to the Department of Education and Skills. There are specific requirements to be met in this process.

See **Appeals Procedure** on Page 4 of this policy.

## **Important Information for Parents/Guardians**

- Parents/guardians are fully responsible for:
  - (i) the validity and accuracy of all the information on the Application Form
  - (ii) informing the school of any change in supplied contact details
  - (iii) informing the school of any specific needs or requirements on the Application Form
  - (iv) ensuring that their children co-operate with school policies
- Failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the Principal/Chairperson of BoM, to discuss the application, may result in a child being refused admission to the school
- Children must have reached their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday by May 1<sup>st</sup> 2019

## **Application Procedures for all children**

The school will accept applications for enrolment anytime on an official Application Form at the school. Applications can also be submitted through the school's website.

### ***(A) Enrolment Procedures for Junior Infants***

#### **Stage 1; Application for Enrolment**

Applications will only be accepted on the basis of receipt of a fully completed Application Form. The Application Form must be signed by both parents/ guardians, as relevant to the circumstances. The Form will be date stamped on receipt by the school. The school will request a recent copy of a utility bill as evidence of address at a later stage.

#### **Stage 2; School Record of Applications**

The school will maintain a record of each child's name, date of birth, address, telephone contact number and date of application on the school's computerised Record of Applications.

#### **Stage 3; Confirmation of Interest**

In January 2019, all applicants will receive a letter requesting the completion of a Confirmation of Interest Form. This completed form must be returned to the school by **a specified date in January 2019**, to confirm your continued interest to enrol your child. This ensures that your child's application will remain on the school record of applications.

**This letter is not a guarantee of a place for your child**

#### **Stage 4; Formal Offer of a place**

A formal offer of a place will issue by post in early February, 2019 to successful applicants. In the event of the number of children exceeding available places, places will be allocated according to the following criteria as set out in Table 1.

**Table 1; Criteria for prioritisation of offers of enrolment**

| Priority | Criterion  |
|----------|--|
| 1        | Brothers and sisters of children already attending this school   |
| 2        | Brothers and sisters of past pupils  |
| 3        | Children of staff members  |
| 4        | Children resident in the parish  |
| 5        | Children not resident in the parish - whose home address is closest to the school (measured by a straight line on an O.S. map) |

Where all of the above criteria are equal among applicants, places will be offered based on a supervised lottery draw.

**Stage 5; Formal Acceptance of a place**

Both parents/guardians must accept the offer **in writing by a date specified in the Letter of Offer**

The offer of a place is subject to the parents/guardians having provided the school with:

- a fully completed, accurate enrolment form
- an original copy of the child's Birth Certificate
- a copy of current utility bill and
- written confirmation accepting all school's policies and procedures. The list includes key policies on Anti-bullying, Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, School Attendance, Learning Support/Special Education and a policy on Pedestrian Access. A complete list of policies is available on the school website [www.knocknacarrans.ie](http://www.knocknacarrans.ie)

Parents of new Junior Infant children will be invited to an information evening in April/May 2019 while new Junior Infants will be invited to an Open Afternoon in June 2019.

**Stage 6; Waiting List**

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list. Should places become available places will be offered in accordance with the criteria as set out in Table 1.

***(B) Enrolment Procedures for children from Senior Infants to 6th class***

Children may be enrolled at any time during the school year, subject to availability of space and the provisions of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

**Stage 1; Application for Enrolment**

Applications, signed by both parents/guardians, as relevant to the circumstances, will be accepted at anytime. The form will be date stamped on receipt by the school. At enrolment the school will request a recent copy of a utility bill as evidence of address.

**Stage 2; School Record of Applications**

The school will maintain a record of applications for each class. Each child's name, date of birth, address and telephone contact number, and date of application will be recorded.

### **Stage 3: Formal Offer of a place**

Both parents/guardians must accept the offer **in writing by the date specified in the Letter of Offer**

The offer of a place is subject to the parents/guardians having provided the school with:

- a fully completed accurate enrolment form
- an original copy of the child's Birth Certificate
- a copy of current utility bill and
- written confirmation accepting all the school policies and procedures

### **Stage 4: Waiting List**

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list. If places become available, parents/guardians next on the list will be informed. Places will be offered as set out in Table 1 above.

### **Enrolment of children with special needs**

All applications for the enrolment of children with special needs must be accompanied by a copy of all relevant medical reports, such as Psychological, Speech & Language, Occupational Therapy, Child Psychiatry, Paediatric reports etc. The purpose of these reports is to establish the needs of the child relevant to his/her disability/special needs and to identify the school support services required.

Following receipt of such a report the BoM shall assess how the school can meet the needs specified in the report. If further resources are required the BoM will, prior to enrolment, request the Department of Education and Skills to provide the required resources. These may include any combination of the following; visiting teacher service, allocation of Special Education Teacher (SET) hours, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture etc.

### **Appeals Procedure**

Parents/guardians, who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the BoM. The Appeal must be lodged in writing within 10 days of receiving the refusal and addressed to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds of the appeal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act on the official form provided by the Department. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of the refusal from the school to enrol their child.

### **Evaluation, Monitoring and Review**

The BoM will evaluate and review all aspects of the policy and amend as required. The policy will also be reviewed annually. The principal will report to the BoM on the enrolment process and especially where an applicant is refused admission.

### **Ratification & Communication**

This policy was ratified by the BoM on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018 and communicated to the school community via the school website. Hard copies are available on request. This policy supersedes all previous enrolment and admission policies.



