

St. Joseph's N.S., Leitrim Village, Roll No: 01125B Admission Policy

School Contact Details

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1. Introduction

The Admission Policy of St. Joseph's N.S., Leitrim Village is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998) and the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018. The Board of Management trusts that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Margaret Molloy- Dunne and the School Principal, Richella Kelly will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy. The principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

1.1 Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives

St. Joseph's N.S., Leitrim Village is a **Catholic National School** for boys and girls under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, Francis Duffy. The school has a Catholic ethos and models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils; cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people and promotes a Christian philosophy of life.

The school caters for pupils from approximately ages 4 years to 12 years in single stream classes from Junior Infants to Sixth class.

Currently there are eleven teachers in the school including: - the principal, eight mainstream class teachers and two Special Education Teachers. In addition to this there are two shared Special Education Teachers based in Kilnagross and Keadue N.S.

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and operates within the rules and regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). This Admission Policy will have regard to available funding and resources.

The school is subject to The Education Act (1998), The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act (2000), The Education for persons with Special Education Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004) and all relevant equality legislation. St. Joseph's N.S. follows the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), which may be amended, from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

1.2 Admission Statement

Within the context and parameters of DES regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act (1998) and the funding and resources available, the Admission Policy of St. Joseph's N.S. supports the principles of: -

- *Inclusiveness*, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special education need;
- *Equality* of access and participation in the school;
- *Parental choice* in relation to enrolment and
- *Respect for the diversity* of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society

Therefore, no child will be refused access to St. Joseph's N.S. for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, accent, language, traveller status, asylum seeker, refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values, sexual orientation, family or social circumstances.

1.3 Children of Other Faiths or No Faith

While Catholic education and the ethos of the school permeates the school day, it is open to parents of children of other faiths or none, to specifically request in writing, that their child 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. Children may complete other work during Catholic religious' instruction and/ or be facilitated in another classroom for the duration of Catholic religious' instruction. Parents will be consulted in relation to these arrangements. It will not be possible however to provide religious instruction in other faiths.

2 Rationale

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

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the Ethos, the Mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements.
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it.

3 Application Procedure

The Board of Management has determined a formal process for the admission of pupils in the school. This process is outlined as follows: -

3.1 For Junior Infants and pupils wishing to enrol on 1st September/ 1st working day in September

Every January the process will commence with an advertisement being place in the local Newspaper and Parish Newsletter. This advertisement will notify parents that Admission Forms will be available for collection from the school from a specified date. Information will also be included in the Communications Letter sent to the parents of pupils enrolled in the school every second or third Thursday. The closing dates for applicants will be **1st March**. Should the 1st March fall on a Saturday or Sunday the closing date will be 5pm the Friday before the 1st March.

3.2 Newly resident pupils wishing to enrol after this date (1st March).

Parents are asked to contact the school as soon as possible either before or after moving to the area. It is always advisable to contact the school before the end of June.

During periods when the school is closed, such as the summer holidays, parents are asked to e-mail the school, leitrimns@gmail.com, give contact details and request an admission pack. The principal will contact the parents at the end of August to discuss admission and provide admission forms etc.

3.3 Admission Form/ Provision of Key Information by Parents

Applications will only be accepted on the basis of a fully completed School Admission Form. This form must be accompanied by a copy of the child's Birth Certificate. Evidence of residency/ address will also be requested in the form of a household utility bill and personal bill etc. School reports and medical reports may also be required.

Completing an Admission Form does not guarantee a place in the school

The Admission Form will seek the following information: -

- Name
- Address
- Date of Birth
- Religion
- Country of Birth
- Nationality
- Father's Name
- Mother's Name
- Contact telephone numbers in the event of emergency (Home, mobile and work)
- Details of medical conditions of which school should be aware of
- Name and address of last school attended and reasons for transfer (if applicable)
- Any further information of importance to the school must be disclosed. (*Failure to disclose important information may result in losing a place in the school e.g. HSE Reports, Psychological or other Assessments, Early Intervention Reports etc*).

This Admission Form will be reviewed and updated regularly, according to DES guidelines, circulars and legislation.

Please note the following points: -

- Failure to fully complete the Admission form and/or failure to disclose important, relevant information may result in refusal to admit a student such as failure to sign and comply with the Code of Behaviour.
- Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage.

3.4 Decision Making

The Board of Management (BOM) will admit all children seeking admission to the school unless: -

- There are more applicants than spaces available (over subscription)
- Parents fail to confirm in writing their acceptance of the school Code of Behaviour (i.e. not signing the relevant section regarding the Code of Behaviour, on the Admission form)

The BOM makes the decision relating to admission in accordance with the school policy. The BOM, keeping in mind DES guidelines in relation to Pupil Teacher Ratio, deem that there will be **27** places available for Junior Infants in September 2019.

The BOM will strive to ensure DES guidelines in relation to Pupil Teacher Ratio are kept in mind in all remaining classes. This may take time to achieve.

3.4.1 Criteria

The BOM have deemed **age** to be the criteria used for the selection of pupils for Junior Infants. Places in Junior Infants will be allocated in the following order: -

1. Equal consideration will be given to the following groups of pupils: - children from the parish living in the following town lands (see list in section 3.2.2), siblings of pupils currently enrolled in the school and children of current staff members (including ancillary staff).

In the event that the number of applications in 1 above should exceed the number of spaces available the children from the above groups will be ranked in order of age with places allocated to the 27 oldest children.

2. All other applications for Junior Infants (other than 1 above). If space is still available Junior Infants will be filled according to the age of the pupils, giving priority to the oldest children

In the exceptional event of a tie in either 1 or 2 above the board will admit both pupils.

Parents of new Junior Infants are notified of the decision of the Board of Management within 21 days of the closing date (1st March) or receipt of Enrolment Form, if applications is made after 1st March.

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Science's Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the ages of 4 years of age upwards although compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years (N.E.W.B guidelines).

3.4.2. Town lands

The BOM will consider application for admission to the school from the following town lands in the parish: - Port, Grange, Lismakeegan, Tonnagh, Kilmaddaroe, Kiltoghert, Corlona, Effrinagh, Finisklin, Farnagh, Drumheckil, Carrickey, Tullylannon, Fawn, Carrickslavan, Mong, Gowel, Drumliffin Glebe, Sheemore, Ballinwing, Bellagart, Leitrim, Drumhierny, Mackan, Drumgeaglom, Bellanaboy, Killarcan, Carrickaveril, Tirmactiernan, Sheffield, Tawnycurry, Newbrook, Drumduff South, Keonbrook. (Please see attached map)

3.4.3. Admission to other classes (Senior Infants to 6th class)

Applicants for Senior Infants to Sixth class will be taken on a "first come first served" basis as vacancies arise in individual classrooms keeping in mind DES guidelines regarding pupil teacher ratio.

Pupils newly resident in the area may be enrolled on the first day of term/ half term subject to class size, available space, the needs of the child and the needs of the children already enrolled in the school.

While recognising the right of Parents to enrol their child in their school of choice, the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. is also responsible for respecting the rights of the

existing school community and especially for the children already enrolled.

3.4.4 Waiting List

Unsuccessful candidates seeking a place in Junior Infants will be ranked in order of age and placed on a waiting list. Places will be offered in order of this list should a place become available. Unsuccessful applications to other classes will be placed on a waiting list also, in a first come first served basis. These waiting lists will remain in place until the end of the school year which the applicant is applying for admission to the school for. (E.g. Application in February 2019 for Admission for the school year September 2019 to June 2020. The waiting lists remains in place until June 2020). After that date candidates will have to make a new application for a place in the school.

3.5 Admission of Junior Infants

Admission of Junior Infants officially takes place on September 1st or the first day of the new school academic year. If a child is not four years of age by September 1st, then he/ she cannot be admitted until after his/ her fourth birthday.

3.6 Successful and Unsuccessful Candidates

All parents of candidates seeking admission to the school will be informed of the BOM's decision, in writing, within 21 days of the closing date/ date of submission of application (if after 1st March).

Successful candidates, for Junior Infants, will receive an invitation to an Induction day in May and will be requested to accept their child's place in the school, in writing, by a specified date and forward their child's PPS Number to the school.

Unsuccessful candidates will be given details of the appeals procedures, outlined in Section 3. 8 below.

3.7 Exceptional Circumstances

The school reserves the right to refuse admission to any pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where:

- The pupil 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 pupil with an appropriate education
- The BOM receives a letter from the Gardaí or HSE indicating that the admission of a pupils would have a serious detrimental effect on other pupils.
- Parents of the pupil refuse to adhere to or sign the school Code of Behaviour.

3.8 Appeals Procedure

In line with current DES procedures parents, who are dissatisfied with an admission 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 date of the letter refusing to enrol. Letters can be posted to or hand delivered to the school.

The BOM will then consider the appeal and give a decision on the appeal, in writing, within 10 days of receipt of the parents' appeal letter. The BOM may decide to uphold the decision not to admit a pupil or to overturn the previous decision and now admit the pupil.

Parents if unhappy with the result of this appeal, (i.e. the candidate is still not admitted) may then appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998) [as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provision) Act (2007)], on the official form provided by the Department of Education and Skills. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of date of the original/ first BOM letter refusing to enrol.

The board will make parents aware of their right to appeal the Board decision in the letter refusing to enrol a pupil. If a parent is dissatisfied with the Board response on appeal they will be provided with a copy of the DES Appeals Application Form. The parents will be responsible for forwarding the Appeals Application Form to the DES. The board are responsible for preparing a response to the appeals committee and will do so when an appeal is made.

The BOM acknowledge that parents may find it stressful if a child is not admitted to the school but advise parents not to approach individual board members in relation to this process. Doing so will result in a candidate being disqualified.

3.9 Offer of Admission Withdrawn

The BOM reserves the right to withdraw an offer to admit a candidate if: -

- Acceptance of place is not confirmed within 10 days
- Necessary information is not provided
- Failure to disclose important information
- False information provided to the school

Should this arise the place will be offered to the next candidate on the waiting list or the next applicant should there not be a child on the waiting list.

3.10 Requests from the Minister of Education and Skills and/ or the National Council for Special Education and the Child and Family Agency.

The BOM will comply fully with any request from the Minister of Education and Skills. The BOM will also comply fully with any request from the National Council for Special Education and the Child and Family Agency, if the BOM believes it is in the best interest of the pupils already enrolled in the school. Otherwise the BOM will appeal these requests.

3.11 Enrolment of pupils with Special Needs

In relation to applications for the admission of children with Special Educational Needs the Board of Management will request a copy of any relevant medical or psychological reports that are available. If such a report is not available, the board will request that the child be assessed prior to admission. The purpose of the assessment is to establish the educational needs of the child relevant to his/ her disability/ special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of such a report the Board of Management shall assess how St. Joseph's N.S. can meet the needs specified in the report. If further resources are required the Board of Management 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, Special Education Teacher, Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport or other services.

The school principal will meet the parents/ guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the suitability and capacity of St. Joseph's N.S. to meet those needs. If necessary, a full case conference may be called which may include parents, principal, class teacher, special education teacher, psychologist and medical personnel.

3.12 Induction Day for Junior Infants

Parents who have returned a completed Admission Form, and have been successful in securing a place in the school will be invited to attend an Induction Day, with their child/ children in the month of May. Children who will be enrolled in Junior Infants the following September will be invited to participate in activities in the Junior Infant classroom while parents will be informed about school rules and policies by the school principal. A '*School Information Booklet*' together with book lists and other relevant material, will be distributed to parents. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers relating to the school.

Attendance at the Induction Day is most important. Parents must confirm their attendance. Children with Special Educational Needs may visit on an alternative day, arranged in advance with the principal and class teacher

3.13 Code of Behaviour

Children enrolled in St. Joseph's N.S. are required to co-operate with the school's Code of Behaviour and other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. Parents/guardians must sign the school Code of Behaviour and are responsible for ensuring that their children co-operate with these policies in an age appropriate way.

3.14 Uniform

Boys

Wine jumper
Grey slacks
White shirt/ polo shirt
Black shoes
P.E. Grey tracksuit bottoms and runners
(Velcro runners are recommended until children are able to fasten laces)

Girls

Wine jumper/ cardigan
grey pinafore/ skirt/ slacks
White shirt/ polo shirt
Black shoes/ boots
Grey tracksuit bottoms and runners (Velcro runners are recommended until children are able to fasten laces)

4. Communication

This policy will be included in the '*School Information Booklet*'. Copies of the policy will be given to all parents applying for admission to the school. This policy, once approved by the Patron, will be uploaded to the school website www.leitrim-ns.ie.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and changed where deemed necessary.

6. Approval and Ratification

This policy was last approved and ratified by the Board of Management (BOM) of St. Joseph's N.S. on 17th January 2019.

This policy will be forwarded to the Patron for approval and will be modified by the BOM if the Patron deems it necessary. Once approved by the Patron it will be uploaded to the school

website www.leitrim-ns.ie and a hard copy given to all parents who wish to admit a child to the school.

7. References/ Resources

- Guidelines from CPSMA/Church of Ireland Board of Education and INTO
- Circulars 07/07, 38/2007, 02/05 and 22/2002– available on Dept of Education & Science website, www.education.ie
- Management Board Member’s Handbook, CPSMA, Appendix 25 Special Education
- Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018
- Education (Admission to Schools) Bill 2016, Explanatory Memorandum
- Education Act, 1998, Sections 9, 15 (2), 29, 30
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Sections 19, 20, 23, 24, 28
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004
- Draft Bill (Education Acts 1998 and 2013 Admission Policies of Schools and Related Matters 2013)
- Data Protection Act, 1988, 2003
- Equal Status Act 2000, Section 7
- Questions and Answers on The Education Act 1998 and The Education Welfare Act 2000, INTO.
- Equality and Education. The Equality Authority 2001.
- An introduction to The Equal Status Act 2000. The Equality Authority –Educational Establishments

Websites

DES	www.education.ie
INTO	www.into.ie
IPPN	www.ippn.ie
The Equality Authority	www.equality.ie
CPSMA	www.cpsma.ie
National Council for Special Education	www.ncse.ie

Relevant extracts from relevant legislation can be provided on request

