

**Admission Policy of St. Joseph's N.S. (Leitrim Mixed N.S.)
Leitrim Village, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, N41 EC 81
Roll No: 01125B**

**School Patron: Bishop Francis Duffy, Bishop of Ardagh and
Clonmacnois**

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 25/ 08/ 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 St. Joseph's N.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.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St. Joseph's N.S. is a Catholic Co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, Francis Duffy.

'Catholic Ethos' in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting: -

- a) The full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects, and
- b) A living relationship with God and with other people and
- c) A philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and
- d) The formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith and

Which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/ or such ethos and/ or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S 15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Joseph's N.S. shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for 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.

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While Catholic education and the ethos of the school permeates the school day, St. Joseph's N.S. 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. (See Section 17 below).

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 other schools.

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).

3. Admission Statement

St. Joseph's N.S. will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

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

St. Joseph's N.S. is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment

which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000 and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

St. Joseph's N.S. is not a special school and currently does not operate a special class within the school. This will continue, as in previous years, unless otherwise directed by the NCSE or the Department of Education and Skills.

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, adaptations to the school building and environment, specialised equipment or furniture, transport or other services.

The BOM of St. Joseph's N.S. 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.

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.

St. Joseph's N.S. is a Catholic Primary 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

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

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applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice.

The BOM of St. Joseph's N.S. 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 below in section 6.1 and map in appendix 1), 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 specified number of oldest children. (Please see school's Annual Admission Notice for this specified number).

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 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: the board will admit both or all pupils tied for a place.

6.1 *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, Carrickevy, 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 at Appendix 1)

7. 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 fees or contributions (howsoever described) 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 his 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;

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(other than, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school)

- (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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Joseph's N.S. will be based on the following

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- 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 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and 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.

9. 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Joseph's N.S., 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 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.

11. 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 St. Joseph's N.S. 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; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

12. 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 certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to St. Joseph's N.S. 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 St. Joseph's N.S. 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.

14. 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.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

15.1 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. A school 'Admission Form' must be completed and returned to the school with proof of age, proof of address and copies of previous school reports, if applicable. If a number of applications are received at the same time for admission to one class applicants will be ranked in order of age. Applicants will be informed in writing as to the board's decision within the timeline outlined in the school's annual admission notice.

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.

In the event of oversubscription to a class, applicants will be placed on a waiting list for admission to a class, ranked according to age (if applications are received at the same time) otherwise ranked in order of application. The waiting list will remain in place for the duration of the school year in which admission is being sought.

15.2 Admissions during the school year

Children may be enrolled in St. Joseph's N.S. 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.

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

The board of St. Joseph's N.S. or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) 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.

17. 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, who has 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:

All parents are made aware that the Grow in Love programme is taught in all classes and if any parent has concerns about this programme they may view the content of the pupil textbooks and pupil workbooks. Parents may specifically request in writing, that their child will be excused from attendance at formal religious instruction classes and specifically Catholic liturgies. The teachers will make every effort to accommodate for the child not participating in formal religious instruction, not saying prayers, not attending a prayer service or mass. 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 on an interesting, educationally appropriate and child friendly activity set by the class teacher, 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. Children of other faiths and none and their families are most welcome to join their class at any sacramental or liturgical celebration.

In St. Joseph's N.S. we believe that having children from various faiths in a school can be used as an opportunity to develop understanding and tolerance of others. Every opportunity will be taken to develop respect for other religions and to celebrate difference.

18. Reviews/ Appeals

18.1 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.

18.2 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 (1)(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 (1)(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.

Appendix 1

Map of Parish Townlands

