Rushall National School

Pike of Rushall, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

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ADMISSION POLICY OF RUSHALL N.S

Pike of Rushall, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

Roll No. 12231L

Patron: Niall Coll, Bishop of Ossory

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 **16th September 2023**. 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 Rushall National School 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

Rushall NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos. The Bishop of Ossory is the Patron of this school.

'Catholic schools are communities which are open, welcoming and inclusive. Therefore, Catholic schools may include children who adhere to other religions or other stances for living. While mindful of their duty to educate in the distinctive beliefs, values, and practices of the Catholic community, teachers will bear witness to an attitude of respect for and appreciation of all'. *'The Catholic Preschool & Primary Religious Education Curriculum p15'*

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:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and 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 Rushall NS 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.

Ethos of Rushall National School

The 'ethos' of Rushall National School N.S. encompasses collective attitudes, beliefs, core values, traditions, aspirations and goals. These are reflected in the actual practices which are carried out in the school on a daily, weekly and yearly basis. While it is impossible to outline all aspects of the school 'ethos', the following characteristics are experienced and promoted as essential elements in the establishment of a supportive and positive 'ethos'.

- In Rushall N.S., where the ethos is that of a Christian Catholic school, religious instruction, in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Catholic Church is part of the education given to children who belong to that Church.
- The pupils are prepared for the reception of the sacraments of First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, in accordance with arrangements in the diocese.
- Prayer is a feature of the school day.

- The school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil, including his / her relationship with God, with other people and with the environment.
- The Principal and teaching staff aim at maintaining high professional standards and creating a safe and happy environment.
- A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community. Pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities.
- Close contact is maintained between school and home. Parents / guardians and teachers support one another and collaborate with one another in leading the children to the fullness of their potential at the different stages.
- The ancillary staff in the school are highly esteemed and respected. It is recognised that their work makes a valued contribution to the process of education.

Mission Statement

- Rushall National School is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.
- While Rushall National School is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions.
- Rushall National School will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes.
- Rushall National School will encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts and through their involvement in the Rushall National School Parents Association.
- Rushall National School will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to encourage in the pupils respect for people and property and the idea of being responsible.
- Rushall National School will promote gender equity amongst the teachers and pupils.
- Labhraimid Gaeilge i rith ceachtanna Gaeilge agus go neamhfhoirmiúil.
- Out school motto is: “Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí”.

School Patron: Bishop Niall Coll (Diocese of Ossory)
Chairperson of BOM: Mr. Danny Reddin

3. ADMISSION STATEMENT

Rushall NS 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.

Rushall NS will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Rushall NS will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

All denominational schools

Rushall NS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Roman 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

5. ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

Applications will be open on the day stated on our Admissions Notice.

- Application forms will be available to download from the school website or by emailing office@rushallns.ie or contacting or collecting the Application form from the school office. Any applications received after the designated date will be deemed as late.

The following procedure will be followed:

Stage 1

- The initial Application form must be completed and returned on/before the last day of applications as identified in our Admissions Notice.
- Once the specific allocated time on our Admissions Notice has passed, places will be allocated, based on the Enrolment Criteria laid out below.
- When the enrolment reaches its maximum specified number, a waiting list will ensue.
- Any Application received after the stated date on the Admissions Notice will be deemed as late.
- After all the applications received by the Admissions deadline have been allocated places in the school or on a waiting list, each late application will be dealt with by applying the Admission criteria on the date the application is received.

  The submission of an application form indicates the pupil's acceptance of the Ethos of Rushall NS., the Code of Behaviour and all other policies of the school.

Stage 2

Admission to the school implies full acceptance of the school Code of Behaviour and all other school policies. Parents/Guardians must sign the Code of Behaviour and accept the operation of the school code. Pupils are expected to comply with all reasonable requests from staff members and school management.

- Parents/Guardians will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing within three weeks of the enrolment deadline on the Annual Admissions Notice.
- Parents offered places must complete the Acceptance Form and the Enrolment Form and return it to the school within a specified period (usually fourteen days).
  Any successful applicant who does not return the Acceptance and Enrolment forms will put their admission at risk.
  The following must also be included with the completed Acceptance Form and Enrolment Form:
  Birth Certificate
  Baptismal Certificate (for those who wish to receive the Sacraments and were baptised outside Castletown Parish)
  Copies of all relevant up to date reports/assessments to the child (if any). The school may wish to meet the Parents/Guardians to discuss the needs of the child or the Parents/Guardians may themselves request such a meeting.

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

All denominational schools

Rushall NS is a Roman Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman 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 applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

Criteria to be used:

1. Children who are four years of age before the first day of the academic year who have siblings currently enrolled in the school.

2. Children who are four years of age before the first day of the academic year and who live within the **traditional geographical catchment area of the school**. Evidence of residency, if necessary, may be requested in the form of a recent utility bill such as ESB, house insurance etc.

3. Children who are four years of age before the first day of academic year who live in neighbouring parishes and for whom Rushall is the closest school.

4. Children who are four years of age before the first day of the academic year and who live in the Parish of Castletown.

5.Children not in the abovenamed categories and who are four years of age before the first day of the academic school year.

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:

- If the applications within categories exceed the number of places available, older children will have precedence.

- If, in the event that one place is available and the next two children are twins; both will be taken.

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, other than in relation to a student's attendance at an early intervention class or an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time.

(b) The payment of fees or contributions howsoever described by the school.

(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
other than in relation to
admission to a special school or a special class, in so far as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special education needs concerned and/or
Admission to an Irish language school, in accordance with the provisions of Section 62 (9) of the Act.

(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;

(f) 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. (In other words, there is no advantage if the enrolment forms are handed in to the school on the first or last day of the specified days for enrolment. However, late applications will affect enrolment if the school is overbscribed).

8. DECISIONS ON APPLICATIONS

All decisions on applications for admission to Rushall NS 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 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 below in relation to applications for places in years other than Junior Infants.)

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 18below for further details).

10. ACCEPTANCE OF AN OFFER OF A PLACE BY AN APPLICANT

In accepting an offer of admission from Rushall NS, 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 Rushall NS 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.
Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

(i) an application for admission to the school has been received,

(ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or

(iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

(i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;

(ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;

(iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;

(iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

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 Rushall NS 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 Rushall NS 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.
Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

15. PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO OTHER YEARS AND DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- If a school place becomes available in Junior Infants after the !st of September it must be offered to the child who is next on the waiting list.
- Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to the enrolment policy of the school, available space, and either with approval of the Department of Education & Skills ***or*** when a transfer is made because of a change of the ordinary residence of the child. Such applications will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
  Applicants must provide –
  official application for Rushall NS
  reason for desired transfer
  written report from previous school
  up to date educational, medical, psychological and behavioural reports from previous school.
- Where admission is granted, a decision will be taken as to whether such a place may be offered immediately or at the beginning of the next academic year.
- A pupil who leaves the school and who is struck off the rolla/POD, and who subsequently wishes to return to the school must reapply to the Board of Management in writing.
- Parents/guardians who request a school place will be given an enrolment policy and an enrolment form. When the enrolment form has been received by the school, the parent/guardian will be informed if there is a place available.
- It has been agreed and ratified by the BOM that the maximum number of students which can be accommodated at Rushall NS is 42.

16. DECLARATION IN RELATION TO THE NON-CHARGING OF FEES

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Rushall NS 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

A written request should be made to the principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. REVIEWS/APPEALS

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.

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.

This policy will be reviewed as necessary in light of experience. This policy was approved by the Board of Management of Rushall NS on **21st of November 2024**

Signed Danny Reddin Date 21/11/24

Mr. Danny Reddin (Chairperson, Board of Management)