Ballinderreen N.S.
Admissions Policy



Introduction

The Board of Management of Ballinderreen NS School hereby sets out its Enrolment and Admission Policy in accordance with the provisions 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 Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal Teacher will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy.
The policy was approved by the school patron and ratified by the Board of Management on 13th of October 2026. 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 Ballinderreen NS 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.

Ballinderreen NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway.

"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 Ballinderreen 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.

2. General School Information

At present, the teaching staff consists of 1 Administrative Principal, 7 mainstream teachers, 2 Special Class teachers, 3 Special Education Teachers, 8 Special Needs Assistants and 1 full time secretary.

Our school is a mixed school with boys and girls in all classes, from junior infants to sixth class. We have an inclusive policy and will enrol pupils with special needs, disability and any other educational challenges. We depend on funding and educational provision from the Department of Education and Skills and we operate within the rules laid down by the Department. The Board of Management may, from time to time, participate in fundraising for particular extra provisions that it deems necessary.

Class starts at 9.00 a.m. and finishes at 2.40 p.m. Infant Classes finish at 1.40 p.m.

3. Admission Statement

Ballinderreen 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 had 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.

Ballinderreen National School has established two classes for children with autism which provides an education exclusively for ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister of Education and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5 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.

c) The Autism class in Ballinderreen National School provides an education exclusively for students with Autism (ASD) and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

5. Oversubscription in mainstream classes

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:

Junior Infant Enrolment Criteria

If the number of children on the list of applicants exceeds the number of places available, the following prioritising criteria are used:

Priority	Criterion
1.	Priority is given to brothers and sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past.
2.	Families whose primary residence is in the immediate areas of Ballinderreen Parish.
3.	Children of current staff.

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), names will be drawn out of a hat:

6. 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; other than, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) sibling of a student 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.

Criteria for enrolment into the ASD Class

Enrolment in the Autism class at Ballinderreen NS, will only be available to children who meet the following eligibility criteria.

The following must be provided in support of an application for admission.

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 – this is a psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report
- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports
- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation and rationale as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs
- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism

7**. Oversubscription in an autism class**

The maximum class size is six pupils. If the number of eligible children on the list of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply beginning with number one, once a definite diagnosis of Autism has been provided by a qualified professional.

- 1. Internal School transfer.
- 2. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and/or children resident in the catchment area of the parish .

- 3.Children residing outside the catchment area of the parish.
- 4. Children of permanent school staff members

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (where the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangement will apply:

a) **The oldest child will be offered the place.**

All unsuccessful qualifying applicants will be placed on a Placement List, in accordance with the above criteria for places that may become available. The Placement List is valid for vacancies which occur in the current school year only. All applications will be reviewed with reference to the selection criteria in April each year.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Ballinderreen 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 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 17 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admissions from Ballinderreen 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 Ballinderreen 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.

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 Ballinderreen 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 Ballinderreen 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

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

Criteria for Enrolment to Senior Infants to 6th Classes

Priority	Criterion
1.	Priority is given to brothers and sister of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past.

2.	Families whose primary residence is in the immediate area of Ballinderreen Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish.
3.	Children of current staff.

All children enrolled are expected to comply with and support the school's Code of Behaviour, as well as the school's designated policies on Curriculum, Organisation and Management.

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

The Board of Management of Ballinderreen 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

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents of the student have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school.

Pupils will read for pleasure during religious instruction.
Pupils may attend sacramental practices in the church with the consent of parents. If consent is refused, the teacher will set work for the pupil(s) who will be supervised in another classroom.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of 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 of Management 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, 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 was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on 13th October 2026

Máire Fenton
Chairperson

Barry Quinn
Principal