

# ADMISSION POLICY



September 2020

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST BNS, CASHEL

Roll Number: 20155R

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## Admission Policy of St John the Baptist BNS

School Address: Old Road, Cashel, Co. Tipperary, E25 R259

School Website: [www.cashelbns.ie](http://www.cashelbns.ie)

Roll number: 20155R

School Patron: Archbishop of Cashel & Emlý

### 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 11<sup>th</sup> May 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 John the Baptist BNS 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 John the Baptist BNS is a Catholic all boys primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Cashel and Emlý.

"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, a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (b) including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; 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 the 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 John the Baptist BNS 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.

#### **OUR MISSION**

- To provide a safe, friendly, effective and stimulating educational environment
- To promote the principles of respect, truth and equality
- Seek to promote confidence, self-esteem and communication skills
- To show consideration and respect for each individual and for others
- Affirm in faith and celebrate difference
- Strive to help children to attain goals and to help each child develop his own potential and talents for future life.

### **3. Admission Statement**

St John the Baptist BNS 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.

### **Single gender schools**

St John the Baptist BNS is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

### **All denominational schools**

St John the Baptist BNS 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 of the Catholic faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

*Note for Parents: the inclusion of the above wording was mandated by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.*

### **Schools with special education class(es)**

St John the Baptist BNS is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

**Note that the special class is a co-educational facility and accepts girls and boys, with special arrangements to be put in place for a girl to be integrated, where appropriate, into class in the adjoining girls' school.**

## **4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the special class**

St John the Baptist BNS, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with **Autism**.

## **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 John the Baptist BNS provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

St John the Baptist is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

*Note for Parents: the inclusion of the above wording was mandated by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.*

The special class attached to St John the Baptist BNS provides an education exclusively for students with **Autism (co-educational)** 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.

## 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:

### **Mainstream (all-boys) Admission Selection Criteria**

1. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address), priority eldest;
2. Children residing in the parish, priority eldest;
3. Children of staff members, priority eldest;
4. Random selection (independently verified).

### **Special Class (Co-ed) Admission Selection Criteria**

\*Note that **school** in the criteria for special class admission refers to St John the Baptist BNS and St John the Baptist Girls Primary School

1. Pupils who fulfil the admissions criteria for the ASD class and who are already enrolled in the school\*  
(Where there is a waiting list, enrolling into the mainstream does not equal automatic entitlement to the ASD special class if/when a place arises nor does it equal automatic entitlement to access the services of the ASD special class)
2. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school\* (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address), priority eldest;
3. Children residing in the parish, priority eldest;
4. Children of staff members, priority eldest ;

If space is still available it will be allocated by random selection of applicants working through the shortlisting criteria outlined at 5 & 6 below:

5. Children from Tipperary (North & South) HSE area with no ASD special class placement

6. Children from Tipperary (North & South) HSE area who already have an ASD special class placement

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:

Priority to eldest in accordance with the above criteria and/or as determined by BoM

## 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;  
other than in relation to:
  - admission to the special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned
- (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) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school (including stepsiblings resident at the same address), priority eldest.
- (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 John the Baptist BNS will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- 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 18](#) below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St John the Baptist BNS, 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 John the Baptist BNS 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 St John the Baptist BNS 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 John the Baptist BNS 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:

*Applications for enrolment during the school year will be considered subject to school policy, available space and the provision of information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress.*

*Such applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis but will normally only be considered for admission on the first day of each new term unless the applicant is newly resident in the area.*

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

*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 John the Baptist BNS 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 John the Baptist BNS 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.*

**Junior Infants, with the exception of students transferring from another school, may only be admitted to the school on or prior to 30 September of each academic year.**

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

The board of St John the Baptist BNS 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

Our school is of a Catholic ethos and, in keeping with that ethos, children of all or no other faith are welcome to apply to this school

We respect the decision of parents to withdraw their child/children from taking part in the religious education curriculum, religious ceremonies, school Masses, etc.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parent(s)/guardian(s) have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction (etc.) in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

**A written request should be made to the Principal of the school via letter or email. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.**

## 18. Reviews/appeals

### **Review of decisions by the board of Management**

The parents/guardians 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 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 parents/guardians 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.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St John the Baptist BNS on 10 September 2020.

Signed: *T M Shanahan* Chairperson, Board of Management



The contents of this policy have been approved by St. Senan's Education Office, acting on behalf of the Patron.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Process for Mainstream Class Admission

Appendix 2: Process for Admission to ASD Special Class

Appendix 3: Mainstream Admission Application - Form 1

Appendix 4: Mainstream Admission Registration - Form 2

Appendix 5: ASD Special Class Admission Application - Form 1

Appendix 6: ASD Special Class Registration - Form 2

### **Appendix 1: Process for Mainstream Class Admission**

- **Enrolment Admission Forms** will be available **on and after the 1 December each year**. This form must be fully completed by the parent/guardian on behalf of the child.
- **Enrolment Admission Forms** must be returned fully completed to school **on or before the last school day in February**.
- If offered a place, an **Acceptance Form** is issued by the school along with **Enrolment Registration Form** and additional documentation as outlined. This must be returned to the school within **seven days**. If this confirmation is not received within that time, the place will be reallocated.
- If the application fulfils all of the enrolment criteria but is not offered a place, as there is no place available, the parent/guardian may opt to put the child's name on a waiting list. The waiting list will operate in accordance with the enrolment criteria and priority order as decided by the Admission Team.
- The waiting list will be maintained for the duration of the academic year only, for which the initial application was made. All documentation regarding enrolment of those that do not secure a place will be destroyed at the end of the academic year.
- Those who wish to apply for a place for the following school year must reapply in accordance with the admissions policy for that school year.

- Please note that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient classroom space is not available.
- An Open Afternoon for all prospective pupils and their parents will take place in Term 3 of each year (after Easter Holidays)

## **Appendix 2: Process for Admission to ASD Special Class**

1. Prior to commencement of any admission process to special class, parents are advised to consult the SENO in order to ascertain the nearest special class to their own geographical location
2. Having been advised by the SENO that St John the Baptist BNS is the nearest special class with potential availability, parents must then adhere to the admissions process of the school as outlined below
3. Parents are reminded to advise the SENO and follow up with school, if the sanction of transport/bus escort is required by the Department of Education & Skills
4. **Enrolment Admission Forms** will be available on/after the **1 December** each year. This form must be fully completed by the parent/guardian on behalf of the child.
5. **Enrolment Admission Forms** and requested relevant documentation must be returned fully completed to school on or before **1 February**.
6. Parents are reminded that applications to Special Class will only be processed on the basis of the inclusion of relevant professional reports with the Enrolment Admission Form. The following statements must be included within the reports:
  - (i) diagnose ASD according to DES guidelines – DSM IV/V or ICD 10 sanctioning letter
  - (ii) state that consideration could be given to placement in an ASD Special Class in a mainstream school. It is envisaged that reports should differentiate between a Special Class setting and Special School setting to ensure the needs of the child are accurately met. Please note that consideration for special class admission will not be provided where reports state special school as opposed to special class provision is most suitable to meet the child's learning needs.
  - (iii) Reports should not be more than two years old from the date of proposed enrolment (i.e. start date of the academic school year)
7. The withholding of reports and pertinent information from the School Admissions team will invalidate an Enrolment Application at any time. Where

there is insufficient information provided about a child, the school may not be able to make a decision.

8. Following the closing date for applications – **1 February**, the list of applications will be reviewed by the admissions committee/team. Factors taken into consideration will include:
  - (i) *Diagnosis* – child must have professional reports as outlined in point 6(i) above
  - (ii) *Integration* – child must be capable of integrating into the mainstream, at an age appropriate level and from a health & safety point of view (where challenging behaviours can occur)
  - (iii) *Appropriateness of the placement* – child must be able to access the primary school curriculum. If a general learning disability also presents, it must fall within the borderline to mild GLD range to ensure the child can access the primary school curriculum when integrating into mainstream classes
9. The parents of a child applying for a place in Special Class may be invited to visit the school to meet with a member of the Admissions Team in **January/February**. Any further information requested from the parent/guardian will be provided at this meeting.
10. Places will be offered in **February**. If offered a place, an **Acceptance Form** is issued by the school along with **Enrolment Special Class (ASD) Registration Form** and additional documentation, if required. This must be returned to the school within **seven days**. If this confirmation is not received within that time, the place will be reallocated.
11. Once the completed Acceptance Form and Registration Form have been received the Admissions team will meet with parents/guardians again to complete the NCSE Special Class Application Form. This form is then forwarded to the SENO who finalises the decision on whether or not the child can be enrolled in the ASD Special Class.
12. If the application fulfils all of the enrolment criteria but is not offered a place, as there is no place available, the parent/guardian may opt to put the child's name on a waiting list. The waiting list will operate in accordance to the enrolment criteria and priority order as decided by the Admission Team.
13. The maximum class size is 6 pupils, having due regard for space allocated per child, as per Health & Safety Regulations and according to DES guidelines. If the number of applicants eligible for enrolment exceeds the

number of places available, the selection criteria as outlined in Section 6  
Oversubscription of the Admissions policy will apply.

14. The waiting list will be maintained for the duration of the academic year only, for which the initial application was made. All documentation regarding enrolment of those that do not secure a place will be destroyed at the end of the academic year.
15. Those who wish to apply for a place for the following school year must reapply in accordance with the admissions policy for that school year
16. Please note that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient classroom space is not available
17. Parent/Guardian will be requested by the school to consent to a visit by school staff to the child's pre-school/school/home setting to observe the child
18. Parent/Guardian will be invited on another occasion to come with their child to the class to meet with staff and see the classroom
19. An Open Afternoon for all prospective pupils and their parents will take place in Term 3 of each year. The first year of the child's enrolment in ASD Special Class will be used to assess their educational needs, develop a student support plan to address these needs and assess whether the placement is appropriate.
20. The BOM seeks to ensure that placement within the ASD Special Class for children are reviewed annually in order to ensure that the placement continues to be appropriate for each child.
21. It is the policy of the ASD Special Class, being a class attached to a mainstream school, to encourage the inclusion of the children with ASD in mainstream classes, once this is in the best interests of the child, while also having due regard to the educational benefit of all pupils enrolled in our school.
22. The factors for consideration of enrolment as outlined in part 6 above, taken by the Admissions Team, are core reflections when offering placements.
23. It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from Special Class once they have reached the age of thirteen. Pupils who reach the age of thirteen

after 30 September in any year will be permitted to complete that academic year. This means a June discharge in the following year.

24. Discharge may also be recommended at any stage within the first year and subsequently if following psychological assessment and consultation with parents/guardians, it is felt that the placement is no longer appropriate or serves the best interest of the child. The Board of Management reserves the right to overrule any decision made in relation to discharge at any stage. The school also reserves the right to review the child's progress after each year to determine whether this is an appropriate placement for the child.