

Admission Policy of St. Macartan's NS

School Address: Sheil Avenue, Bundoran, Co. Donegal

Roll number: 19686S

School Patron: Bishop of Clogher

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 1st September 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. Macartan's 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.

- The school depends on the grants and staffing resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and it operates under the Rules for National Schools, the Education Act 1998 and within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department of Education and Skills in the form of circulars.
- The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.
- Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Skills' regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, the funding and resources available, and with due regard to this Enrolment Policy, the school supports the principles of:
 1. Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational needs;
 2. Equality of access and participation in the school;
 3. Parental choice in relation to enrolment;
 4. Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and ways of life in society.
- School starts each day at 9.10 am and finishes for Junior and Senior Infants at 1.50pm and for all other classes at 2.50pm.
- The school has a Code of Behaviour, which was drawn up by staff and Board of Management in consultation with parents and is reviewed on an annual basis.

- The enrolment of a child in the school is an acceptance by the child and his/her parent(s)/ Guardian(s) of the school's Code of Behaviour and all current and future school policies.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St. Macartan's NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Clogher.

"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 St. Macartan's 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.

Mission Statement

We treasure the personal and individual care and attention given to each child in our school and also the co-operation of the entire school community in helping us to deliver our vision for each child.

Objective

The objective of St. Macartan's NS, Bundoran is to ensure the holistic development of each child in our school.

This development includes physical, intellectual, emotional, social, personal and spiritual development.

We hope that each child reaches their full potential in our school and that this is achieved in a happy, caring, learning environment. Our whole school plan in various curricular, extra-curricular and organisational areas will help us to deliver this vision.

The entire school community working together will also help us to realise our aims. As the school is a Roman Catholic School, this vision ties in with the Schedule of a Catholic School.

Schedule of a Catholic School

A Roman Catholic school (which is established in connection with the Minister) aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith.

3. Admission Statement

St. Macartan's 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.

All denominational schools

St. Macartan's 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.

Admission Process

The Annual Admission process will normally begin on the first Monday of February, and the closing date will be three weeks after this. One week before the commencement of this process, the school will publish their Annual Admission notice on www.stmacartans.ie. This will contain all relevant information pertaining to the process. Furthermore the notice of the commencement of the process, and closing date, will be advertised in:

- School Newsletter
- Text to parents
- Informing pupils already in the school
- Parish Bulletin.

Application to enrol forms and this Admission policy will be available on the school website, and in hard copy on request. A Birth Certificate must accompany all applications. Incomplete forms may be deemed invalid.

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 child has not reached their 4th Birthday on the 1st of September of the relevant year.

All denominational schools

St. Macartan's NS is a Roman Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

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:

In general terms the Board will deem the school to be full based on the DES Staffing Schedule. However it reserves the right to determine, on an annual basis, the number of classes in the school bearing in mind the available space to accommodate additional classrooms, existing and future pupil placement demands and demographics.

The BOM reserves the right on an annual basis to determine the maximum number of children in each separate class bearing in mind:

- a. Size of / available space in classroom
- b. Educational needs of children of a particular age
- c. Multi-grade classes
- d. Presence of children with special educational/ behavioural needs
- e. Department's maximum class average directives (currently a maximum average of 26 children but may change from time to time as directed by the Department of Education and Skills). The allocation of children to individual classes is a matter for the principal.

Selection Criteria for admission in the event of oversubscription:

As a school under the patronage of the Bishop of Clogher the following order of priority will be implemented in the enrolment/admission of children in the school

1. Brothers and sisters of children in the school.
2. Children of the parish (including children of Travelling Community resident within the parish).
3. Children who live outside the parish and do not have a suitable school in their parish.
4. Children of staff.
5. Children who apply to the school and are not residents within the parish boundaries are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the groups from (1) to (4) have been allocated places.

In order to accommodate groups (1) and (2) the BOM may have to operate a cut off in minimum age of applicants to give places to groups (1) and (2) if there is pressure for places in the school. The default minimum age for enrolment is four years old prior to 1st September of year of enrolment. Pupils who have not been in any national school previously will not usually be admitted to Junior Infants after 30th September of any 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:

Names will be drawn in a lottery

5. 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:

Points (a) to (g) must be included here by all schools. There are limited exceptions to some of these (highlighted in red below) and schools must retain the exceptions that apply to them and delete those that do not:

- (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) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents of a student 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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

6. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Macartan's 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.

7. 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Macartan's 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.

9. 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. Macartan's 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.

10. 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.

11. 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. Macartan's 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 St. Macartan's 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.

12. 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.

13. 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:

This is subject to school policy and available space overall and in the relevant class. Parents will meet with the school principal, complete an application to enrol and provide a Birth Certificate.

When the application for enrolment is made the Principal shall ascertain from the parent whether the pupil was previously enrolled in another National School. In order to assess the needs of the child and in accordance with Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018, Section 66, the principal will seek all reports relating to that child from the principal of the school where the child previously attended.

The child will progress to the appropriate class- repeating or skipping a class is not permissible. In the event that the child has not attended a school in the State, the principal will assign them to an age appropriate class.

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:

This is subject to school policy and available space overall and in the relevant class. Parents will meet with the school principal, complete an application to enrol and provide a Birth Certificate.

When the application for enrolment is made the Principal shall ascertain from the parent whether the pupil was previously enrolled in another National School. In order to assess the needs of the child and in accordance with Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018, Section 66, the principal will seek all reports relating to that child from the principal of the school where the child previously attended.

The child will be placed in the appropriate class- repeating or skipping a class is not permissible. In the event that the child has not attended a school in the State, the principal will assign them to an age appropriate class.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of (name of school) 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

15. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

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:

The Parents should inform the child's class teacher and/or Principal of their wishes in this regard in writing. A note is recorded on the pupil's Aladdin profile and this information is transferred to the applicable class teacher accordingly as the pupil progresses through the grades.

Where the request relates to non-religious instruction, the pupil will be allocated curriculum work during religious-instruction time. The school cannot accommodate requests to have the pupil removed from the school to another class due to timetabling, staff resource and supervision considerations.

Where the request relates to non-attendance at religious ceremonies, the pupil will be allocated curricular work and will be supervised by another class teacher in that teacher's class or in a classroom supervised by support teachers with other children who are not attending.

16. 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.