

St. Mary's Primary School,
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Admission Policy

Version 1.0

Roll No. 183810

School Patron: Bishop Tom Deenihan

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 17th November 2022. 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. Marys Primary 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 to mainstream school is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT AND GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL

St. Marys Primary School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath, Bishop Tom Deenihan. "Catholic Ethos" is 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

Meath Diocesan Education Office

Approved

Signed: *m. Melvin*

Date: 4/12/23



(c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and

(d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

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

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Marys Primary School 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.

1. ST. MARY'S MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary's Primary School is a Catholic Primary School which strives to provide a well ordered, happy and secure atmosphere where the self-esteem of each child will be enhanced and the educational, spiritual, moral and cultural needs of each child identified and developed with compassion, enthusiasm and due regard for the child's individuality. St. Mary's Primary School promotes excellence in teaching and learning.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

St. Mary's Primary School operates under the Rules for National Schools, the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, enacted sections of the Education of Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004, all relevant equality legislation and Department of Education and Skills Circulars.

Range of Classes: Junior Infants – Sixth Class, 3 ASD Preschool Class (Sunflower Rooms Early Intervention)

Staff: 1 Principal, 17 Mainstream teachers and 3 ASD Preschool class teachers, 10 support teachers, 15 S.N.A.s, 1 secretary, 1 caretaker, 2 cleaners 3 bus escorts .

Status: Co-Ed Vertical School

St. Mary's Primary School depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills (D.E.S.) and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. School policies must have regard to the funding and resources made available to the school and must consider at all times the health and safety of the pupils.

Our school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

Within the context and parameters of Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act 1998, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the key values of equality of access and inclusivity.

3. ADMISSION STATEMENT

St. Marys Primary School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

St. Marys Primary School 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 pupil a person who is not of the Roman Catholic faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Marys Primary School 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.

4. CATEGORIES OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CATERED FOR IN THE SPECIAL CLASS

St. Marys Primary School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students of preschool age (3 to 5 years) with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

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
- c) St. Marys Primary School is a Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
- d) The special class attached to St. Marys Primary School provides an education exclusively for preschool students aged 3 to 5 years with Autistic Spectrum Disorder 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.

The maximum enrolment for school year 2024/2025 is 412 mainstream pupils and 18 pupils in the ASD Preschool Class giving an overall total enrolment of 430. The maximum enrolment for 2024/2025 school year will be the same – 412 mainstream pupils and 18 pupils in the ASD preschool class. This will be reviewed periodically in line with any amendment to the DES Staffing Schedule. As there are varying sizes of classrooms within the school, health and safety of pupils is a key factor in determining the maximum number of pupils in each mainstream classroom.

- 1 classroom - 31 square metres (temporary rented accommodation)
- 1 classroom – 70 square metres
- 2 classrooms – 80 square metres
- 6 classrooms - 47 square metres
- 3 classrooms - 40 square metres
- 4 classrooms - 68 square metres

For the 2023/2024 school year there will be a maximum of 50 places available in Junior Infants. Places may be available in other classes subject to places becoming available and subject to overall total enrolment.

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:

SELECTION CRITERIA

In the event that the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places, the following criteria will pertain.

Criteria used in decision making in relation to admission are **in order**:

1. Children applying for places who have siblings already in the school (Junior Infants to 5th Class) will be facilitated within the limits stated above with priority to the eldest.
2. Children resident within the defined primary catchment area of the school as listed in Appendix 1
3. Children resident within the town boundary of Mullingar with priority to the eldest
4. All other applicants with priority to the eldest

If two or more children are tied for a place in Junior Infants a lottery will apply. The lottery will be overseen by a member of the Parents Association, a member of staff (not the teacher nominee) and the Principal.

Other factors that may be considered are:

Health and Safety.

In the event that the school is oversubscribed any selection criteria not included in this policy shall not be taken into account.

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 an early intervention class, 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 ASD Preschool 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 siblings of current enrolment Junior Infants to 5th class.
- (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. Marys Primary School 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 classes 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. Mary's Primary School, 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. Mary's Primary School 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.
- (v) Children enrolled in St. Mary's Primary School are required to co-operate with and support the school's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with these policies in an age-appropriate way.

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;
- (vi) 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 OVERSCRIPTION

In the event of there being more applications to the class concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to St. Mary's Primary School 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. Mary's Primary School 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:

Places for Senior Infants to Sixth classes will be offered in line with criteria for Junior Infants as vacancies arise in individual classrooms keeping within the limits stated above. This is also subject to school policy and available space within the class. Separate waiting lists will be in operation for each class group which will be valid for the whole school year.

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:

Students will be admitted on an allocated date as stated in letter of offer. If a student does not attend on the allocated date the place offer will be withdrawn.

16. DECLARATION IN RELATION TO THE NON CHARGING OF FEES

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St. Mary's Primary 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.

17. ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, 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.

ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN TO ASD PRESCHOOL CLASS (EARLY INTERVENTION CLASS)

Parents wishing to complete an expression of interest form for their child in the EIC must present a psychological report to the school. This expression of interest form may be completed at any stage during the school year but does not confer a place in the class to the applicant. This comprehensive psychological report must include • A diagnosis of autism • A statement that the minimum level of cognitive functioning is a mild learning disability • A recommendation for a placement in an EIC attached to a mainstream school. This report must accompany the expression of interest form for a place in the EIC. The Board of Management will then consider the expression of interest and notify the parents accordingly. A child can take up a place in this class on/after his/her third birthday. The upper age limit for

inclusion in the EIC is five. (A child cannot be six during the school year). Placement in the EIC is subject to a yearly review.

Parents will be advised as to the child's future schooling with the following options considered. • Mainstream • Mainstream with support teaching • Special Class attached to mainstream school • Special school • Home tuition The EIC operates a maximum class size of six pupils. One teacher and a minimum of two SNAs will work in the EIC. Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places a waiting list is put in place.

Enrolment in the EIC does not entitle the child to a place in a class in the mainstream school.

Places will not be given on a first come first serve basis but preference where possible will be given to siblings of current children enrolled in the school and to children from within the town boundary in need of a place. Places however will be allocated on the basis of the needs of the child and are in the remit of the Board of Management. Consideration may be given to older children and places will not be held for a child to start mid school year. **A child may stay in the EIC for a maximum of 2 years** and a child must be in his/her primary placement in the year of their 6th birthday.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management and updated if necessary.

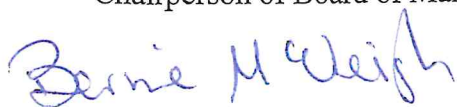
RATIFICATION

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on 13th December 2023



Signed : Barbara Anne O Callaghan

Chairperson of Board of Management



Signed: Bernie McVeigh

13/12/2023

Secretary of Board of Management

St. Mary's Primary School Primary Catchment Area

Appendix 1

Abbeylands

Ashfield Estate

Brookfield

College Hill

Sherwood Park

Robinstown

Irishtown

St. Bridget's Terrace

Green Road

O Growney

Cathedral View

Grand Parade

Raithin

Farranshock

Bishop Gate Street

Fair Green

Marketpoint

Greenpark

Cara Vale

Ardleigh

Ardilaun

The Moorings

Willowbrook

Oaklawns

Grange
Rathdown Wood
Clonmore
Woodlands
Lakeland Drive
Farran
St. Laurence's Terrace
Columb Drive
Valley Bungalows
Valley Cottages
Hawthorn Crescent
Trinity Cottages
Patrick Street
Brewery Terrace
St. Anthony's Cottages
Ennell View Terrace
St. Loman's Terrace
Greenview Terrace
Oliver Plunkett Street
Dominick Street
Fairview Terrace
Clarkemount Avenue
Newbrook Grove
Newbrook Drove
Clonmore
Brosna Estate
Harbour Court

Tailteann Court
St. Agnes Cottages
Canal Avenue
St. Joseph's Cottages
Friars Court
Lady Aberdeen Cottages
Hillside Drive
Old Ballinderry
New Ballinderry
Newtown lawns
Chestnut Drive
Chestnut Grove
Oakcrest
Millmount
Castlecourt
The Elms
Lynn Avenue
Ushnagh Court
Highfield
Hillview
Lynn Heights
Belvedere Hills
Lynn Road
Castle Street
Harbour Street
Mary Street
Central Park

Longford Road