

Admission Policy

Table of contents

1. Introduction
2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school
3. Admission statement
4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class
5. Admission of students
6. Oversubscription in the mainstream classes
7. Oversubscription in the special class
8. What will not be considered or taken into account
9. Decisions on applications
10. Notifying applicants of decisions
11. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant
12. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn
13. Sharing of Data with other schools
14. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription
15. Late Applications
16. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year
17. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees
18. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction
19. Reviews/appeals

Admission Policy of St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S.

School Address: Grange Park, Raheny, Dublin 5.

Roll number: 20281W

School Patron: Archbishop of Dublin

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 3rd 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. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. 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. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

“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;
- b) a living relationship with God and with other people;
- c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus;
- d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith, in 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. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. 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.

In line with our Vision statement we aim to:

- ensure that all children enjoy learning, achieve their potential and become independent life-long learners.
- build effective, collaborative partnerships with families and the wider community.
- achieve a consistently high level of pupil achievement, preparing pupils for the challenges, opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- provide a positive, safe and stimulating environment for children to learn, where all are valued.
- plan and deliver high-quality learning experiences based on a broad and balanced curriculum.
- create a fully inclusive environment with equal opportunities for all.
- foster empathy in order to encourage responsible citizenship.
- ensure that the children learn to value and respect religious and cultural differences.

3) Admission Statement

St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. 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. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a pupil who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

4) Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

St. Benedict's and St. Mary's NS with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students on the Autistic Spectrum.

As specified by the Minister of Education, St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of need specified. i.e. **Autistic Spectrum Disorder (A.S.D.)**

5) Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see Section 6.7 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 admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.
- d) St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
- e) St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. special class for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (A.S.D.) provides an education exclusively for students 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.

Places in ASD classes will be allocated to a maximum of 6 children per class, on condition that the necessary resources are provided, by the National Council of Special Education (NCSE), the Health and Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

6) *Oversubscription in the mainstream classes*

The Board of Management will decide on a cut-off date of birth for all applicants on an annual basis giving priority to the eldest children.

The Board of Management 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:

1. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school
2. Children resident in the parish of Grange Park (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
3. Children of staff – (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
4. Children residing outside the parish of Grange Park (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)

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:

In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest child will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

7) *Oversubscription in the special class*

The number of admissions depends on the number of places available, which may vary from year to year.

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:

1. Children with an ASD diagnosis currently enrolled in the school.

If the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

- Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently in the ASD class.
 - Length of time waiting for enrolment.
2. Applicant students who are siblings and step siblings of children enrolled in the school at the same time who meet criteria.

If the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

- Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently in the ASD class.
 - Length of time waiting for enrolment
3. Students who have been offered a place in the mainstream school for the coming September who meet criteria.

If the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

- Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently in the ASD class
 - Length of time waiting for enrolment.
4. Children with an ASD diagnosis resident within the parish of Grange Park (2 utility bills must be supplied for proof of address – electricity, gas, water, bin charges are acceptable).

If the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

- Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently in the ASD class
- Length of time waiting for enrolment.
- Priority will be given based on proximity to the school to determine distance

5. If spaces are still available, places will be allocated to children with an ASD diagnosis from outside the catchment area. (2 utility bills must be supplied for proof of address – electricity, gas, water, bin charges are acceptable).

If the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

- Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently in the ASD class
- Length of time waiting for enrolment
- Priority will be given based on proximity to the school to determine distance

8) 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 student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí and Early Start
- the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to:
- admission to special class for children with ASD – insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned;
- the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- 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 (1) siblings of a student attending the school
- 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).

9) Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. 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 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 16 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.

10) 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 19 below for further details).

11) Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S., the parent/guardian must indicate—

- whether or not an offer of admission for another school or schools has been accepted. If such an offer has been accepted, details of the offer or offers concerned must be provided
- whether the parent/guardian has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so details of the other school or schools concerned must be provided.

12) 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. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. where -

- It is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading
- 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.
- The parent/guardian 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/ her and that he/she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student;
- An applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in Section 11 above.

13) 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—

- An application for admission to the school has been received.
- An offer of admission to the school has been made.

14) 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. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. 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. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. 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.

15) 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

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 a 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 14.

16) 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

The application will be brought to the next Board of Management meeting and any selection criteria used in relation to such applications will comply with the provisions of the act and will provide that each student seeking admission shall be admitted other than where the school is oversubscribed or where one of the other specific circumstances, as set out in the act, apply

17) Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The Board of Management of St. Benedict's and St. Mary's N.S. or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of

- An application for admission of a student to the school, or
- The admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

18). Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for a student whose parents/guardian or a student who has reached the age of 18 years, have 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.

19) Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent/guardian of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, may request the Board of Management 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 parents/guardians of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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 to 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)

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 has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management every year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

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