

Admissions criteria for entry September 2025

St Mary's Primary School Nursery Unit
25 Mullaghboy Road
Bellaghy
BT45 8HX

Principal: Mrs Mary McCann
Chair of Board of Governors: Mr Joe Diamond

Maintained Nursery Unit
Admissions No: 26 (Part-time)
Session Times: 9:00am – 11:30am

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Website: www.stmaryspsbellaghy.co.uk

Respective Functions of the Board of Governors and the Principal in relation to admissions.

The Board of Governors draws up the admissions criteria and delegates to a Selection Committee consisting of the Principal subject to the final approval of the Board of Governors. The admissions criteria will be reviewed annually by the Selection Committee. Any reference herein to the term the Board of Governors includes any Sub-Committee appointed by the Board of Governors for the purposes of applying the admissions criteria.

Admissions Criteria

A timetable of pre-school admissions procedures setting out the dates by which an application is to be submitted is available at www.eani.org.uk/admissions under 'Pre-School Admissions'. During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered.

The application procedure opens on 10 January 2025 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 24 January 2025 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 24 January 2025 will be treated as a late application.

As the pre-school admissions procedure is in two stages the timetable also specifies the relevant dates at Stage 2 which will determine if an application is to be considered as punctual or late.

Admissions criteria to be used in the event of the school being oversubscribed with applications for available places.

Statutory Criteria

- Children from socially disadvantaged circumstances in their final pre-school year who were born:
 - on or between 2 July 2021 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) and whose parents have not exercised their right to defer their child's entry to primary school; or,
 - on or between 1 April 2021 and 1 July 2021 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
 - have not attended or are not currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged child; and,
 - that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2026.

Note: Children from 'socially disadvantaged circumstances' means a child whose parent has an entitlement to (i) Income Support, or (ii) Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or (iii) Income related Employment and Support Allowance, or (iv) Universal Credit. When parents apply for places for their child on this basis they must provide Benefit Verification to confirm that they have an entitlement. The application procedure for Pre-School will outline how Benefit Verification can be submitted.

- Children not from socially disadvantaged circumstances (as defined above) who are in their final pre-school year (as defined by Criterion 1).

Sub-criteria

In the event of oversubscription on the application of a statutory criterion the sub-criteria will be applied in the order set down.

- Children who are registered and permanent address is in the parish of Ballyscullion
- Children who have listed St Mary's Nursery Unit as their first preference will be given priority. Remaining places will be allocated on the basis of preference i.e. second preference will be admitted before third preference etc.
- Children who will have brothers or sisters (including half/step) enrolled at St Mary's Primary School, Bellaghy (excluding St Mary's Nursery Unit) during 2025/2026 school year. * This must be stated on the application form;
- Children who are the eldest/only child in the family or who have brother/half-brother/sister/half-sister who attended St Mary's Primary School, excluding St Mary's Primary School Nursery Unit, who transferred from Year 7 to Post-Primary School

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Applicants should note that where a familial relationship (i.e. having a brother/half-brother or sister/half-sister attending or having attended the primary school) qualifies for admission, then that relationship will be verified. To enable the Board of Governors to verify family relationships, all applicants using these criteria to gain admission, need to include the name, DOB of that older brother or sister who will be attending St Mary's PS 2025/26. This should be included on the application form or attached as additional information to the application form.

- E. proximity of the child's permanent address to the front gates of the school, as measured using the digital Ordnance Survey mapping service (SpatialNI)

In the event of there being more applicants than places remaining after the last sub-criterion is applied, the following tie-breaker will be applied: children will be selected for admission on the basis of initial letter(s) of their surname (as entered on their Birth Certificate) in the order set out below:

F,E,T,Q,W,A,B,J,O,P,L,Mac,S,M,D,H,Mc,Y,U,Z,I,C,G,K,N,R,V,X

This order was determined by a randomised selection of the letters. In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the forenames will be used.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on or attached to the application form. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the application form or attached to it. Please see 'Duty to Verify' below.

Non-Statutory Criteria

Note: Applications falling under Criterion 3 are processed only during Stage 2 of the admissions process, after final pre-school year (Statutory 1 and 2) applications.

3. Children who were born:

- on or between 1 April 2021 - 1 July 2021 (inclusive), or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
 - and have attended or are currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged (not penultimate aged) child; and,
 - that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1, or
- on or between 2 July 2022 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive); or,
- on or between 1 April 2022 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2027.

Tie Breaker – Non Statutory Criterion 3

Children within Criterion 3 will be selected in Chronological Order of Age – eldest child first. In the event of two or more children having the same DOB the above random selection of letters will be used.

Duty to Verify

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any applicant's Application Form. If the requested evidence is not provided to the Board of Governors by the deadline specified by the Board of Governors, this will result in the withdrawal of an offer of a place. Similarly, if information is supplied which appears to be false or misleading in any material way, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

Supporting Documents

Address Verification – If applying in January these documents must be submitted by 12noon on 31 January 2025.

To enable the Board of Governors to verify addresses, all applicants should provide any two of the following eight documents with the application:-

(i) Bank or building society statement; (ii) Utility bill (for instance electricity, gas, Television Licence, telephone); (iii) Addressed payslip; (iv) Letter awarding Child Benefit to the child or another letter relating to this benefit; (v) Mortgage statement; (vi) Current Driving Licence; (vii) Land and Property Services rates demand; (viii) Rental agreement.

NB any documents being used to verify address should not be more than three months old.

This is in addition to the standard requirement to provide a Birth Certificate.

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Waiting List Policy

Should a space become available after 10 June 2025, all children who were processed in Stage 1 using the published admissions criteria who were initially refused a place, will be contacted first with the offer of the place.

All applications for St Mary's PS NU that were processed in Stage 2 that were initially refused, new applications, late applications will be treated equally and added to a waiting list which will be in place until 30th June 2025.

Places will then be allocated firstly to children who are registered or whose permanent address is in the Parish of Ballyscullion strictly in accordance with chronological age beginning with the eldest child, then beyond parish of Ballyscullion. Parents will be notified in writing. In the event of children with same date of birth being considered for the final place, selection will be on the basis of initial letter(s) of their surname (as entered on their Birth Certificate) in the order set out overleaf (St Mary's sub-criteria). In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the forenames will be used.

The school will contact you in writing if your child gains a place in the school by this method. Your child's name will be automatically added to the list. Please contact the school if you wish for your child's name to be removed from the list.