

Admissions Policy

**Ovens National School
Knockanemore
Ovens
Co Cork**

Roll number: 17251T

**School Patron : Bishop F. Gavin
Bishop of Cork & Ross**

This admission policy is dated the 12th day of December 2022 and hereby revokes all former admission/admissions policies of Ovens N.S. previously published or distributed online or otherwise.

Introduction:

- ◆ This policy was formulated in accordance with the rules for National Schools, rules 10, 64 (1): 64 (2)c: 65 (4): 65 (5). It is also in keeping with the Education Act 1998, Section 15, 2 (D): The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Equal Status Acts and the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 . In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and the parents of children attending the school.
- ◆ This policy is published on the school's website and will be made available in hard copy, on request, to any person who requests it.
- ◆ The relevant dates and timelines for Ovens National School'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 hard copy to any person who requests it.
- ◆ In order to ensure that the school can provide the services required for individual students it is necessary to ascertain general information on the pupil's health and specific requirements that they may have. These may be kept on record.
- ◆ The constitutional right of every child between the ages of four and fifteen to an education has been considered.

Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school:

- ◆ Ovens N.S. is a mixed Roman Catholic National School, under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross. In general, students have been baptised in the Roman Catholic faith, but it has always been the policy of Ovens National School that Students who are members of other Christian Denominations, other faiths or of no faith may equally apply for admission.
- ◆ Religious education in the Catholic Faith is a core subject on the curriculum for all age groups and is an integral part of the ethos of the school. It is, therefore, a standard requirement of the school that students remain in class for religious education lessons unless parents wish to make alternative arrangements to withdraw their children from class at those times. Students are also expected to attend liturgical celebrations but may opt out by prior arrangement with their parents and the school. In the spirit of a Roman Catholic School, the faith of students of other Christian Denominations, of other religions and none is respected.
- ◆ Parents of any applicants who are not of the Catholic Faith are hereby notified that the school does not provide for the specific denominational or other religious education of the student.
- ◆ The school's policy is to accept children seeking to enrol in it, subject to all of the following:
 - a) pupil numbers

- b) the availability of space in the school
 - c) the ability of the school to meet the physical, emotional and educational needs of the pupil
 - d) the provision by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of necessary documentation, when required.
- ◆ The school address is Knockanemore, Ovens, Co.Cork. The catchment area of Ovens N.S. is delineated on a map (available at the school). The phone number is (021) 4872531. The Chairman of the Board of Management is Michael O'Driscoll, Kilcrea, Ovens, Co. Cork. The principal is Eoghan Hyde, Ovens National School. The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills, and it operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the Department. The school policy at all times has regard to the resources and funding available, and the school follows the curricular programme prescribed by the Department, which may be amended from time to time.
 - ◆ The Board of Management will uphold the characteristic spirit of the school, as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions, which are characteristics of Ovens School.

Aims:

- ◆ This policy aims to ensure that the parents/guardians/pupils/staff have the necessary information to enrol a child.
- ◆ The policy also aims to attain information required by the DES on pupils attending Ovens N.S.
- ◆ In the case of over subscription – to ensure that the parents/guardians are clear as to the preference structure determining the pupils who are enrolled in the school.

Admission Statement:

Ovens National 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.

Application and Admissions Procedure:

[Application is an expression of interest and doesn't guarantee a place. Admission is when your child/children has/have been offered a place in Ovens N.S.]

1. Parents/guardians who wish to apply to enrol their children in Ovens N.S. must use the official Ovens N.S. Application Form.
2. No pupil under the age of four on April 1st of the year of admission, or over the age of 15 may be enrolled in Ovens N.S.

Admission of places will occur only after the closing date for applications has passed. The 'closing date' shall mean 17:00 on the first day of November of the school year preceding the school year in respect of which the application for admission relates to. Applications for admission to junior infants received after the closing date will be considered for admission only if there are additional places available and only after all applications on the waiting list have first been offered a place.

In line with Section 62 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 the Board of Management of Ovens National School will move to a lottery system for selection of places for September 2022 onwards. Any parent who has previously submitted an application for admission will be asked to resubmit that application after 1st October of the year preceding admission in line with the Act. Places for Ovens N.S. will then be allocated strictly in accordance with the preferential criteria set out in this policy. Applications for admission can now only be accepted after 1st October for admission in the following year and the closing date shall remain 17:00 on the first day of November of the school year preceding the school year in respect of which the application for admission relates to.

If the number of applications for admission exceeds the number of spaces available within any category of allocation, then those places will be allocated following a lottery of all names submitted by application within each category of allocation priority, until the places are filled. A lottery for places on our waiting list will also be conducted.

3. The application form for admission into junior infants requires, among other things, information relating to current address. In due course, if an applicant is being offered a place in one of Ovens N.S. junior infant classes, then proof of the child's main place of residence may be required. As part of the acceptance process, the applicant may be obliged to produce evidence of residence within the catchment area of Ovens N.S. that is satisfactory to the Board of Management. If this evidence is not provided, as part of the acceptance of offer process, then the priority ranking based on 'living within the catchment' criterion may be withdrawn and the application may be re-ranked to reflect this and may therefore result in the offer of a place being withdrawn.
4. The application form must be fully completed, dated & signed by the parent/s/guardian/s and returned to the principal.
5. An admission form will be given to each parent/guardian whose child has been accepted to Ovens N.S. and this must be completed and returned to the School office within 14 days of issue and the return date will be stipulated on the letter accompanying the admission form. Failure to return the admission form duly completed on or before the stipulated date will result in the place being forfeited.

6. Parents/guardians will be deemed to have accepted the school's Code of Behaviour by accepting a place in Ovens N.S.
7. At application or admission stage, an incomplete form may not be considered, it will be rejected and a place will not be offered nor will a place be allocated on a waiting list, unless and until a complete form has been delivered.
8. If it subsequently transpires that any incorrect information or documentation was furnished, this will render the offer of a place void ab initio. This means that even if a place is offered, it will be withdrawn if any incorrect information and/or documentation was provided.
9. Equality of access is the key value that determines the admission of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, traveller status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances.
10. While recognising the right of parents to seek to enrol their children in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Ovens N.S. is also responsible for respecting the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. The BOM reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children for admission in the school, and in each separate classroom, bearing in mind:
 - a) Size of / available space in classrooms
 - b) Educational needs of children of a particular age
 - c) Multi-grade classes. N.B. We cannot guarantee that every child will go through the school in a single class situation, as it may be necessary to divide classes from time to time.
 - d) Presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs
 - e) DES maximum class average directives.
 - f) The BOM will decide the total intake for junior infants each year
11. Canvassing of members of the Board of Management by any third party in respect of the admission of a child in Ovens N.S. is strictly prohibited. If any such canvassing occurs, the board reserves the right to disqualify the application for admission of the particular child, the subject of said canvassing.
12. The Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 Section 62 (enacted in February 2020) has changed the law on how over-subscribed schools deal with admissions. The Board of Management have considered the legislation and the existing admissions applications and determined that the fairest and most workable solution in implementing this legislation is to apply the following:

In the event of the number of children seeking admissions exceeding the number of places available, the following order of priority will apply to these applications received on or before the closing date.

1st allocation of places	Siblings of current or past pupils of Ovens N. S.
2nd allocation of places	Children of past pupils of Ovens N.S living within the catchment area of Ovens N.S. (to a maximum of 25% of the total number of spaces available for admission in a given year)
3rd allocation of places	Children living within the catchment area of Ovens N.S.
4th allocation of places	Children not living within the catchment area.

For all applications previously received which relate to admission for 2022 onwards, they can now only be accepted after 1st October of the year preceding admission. The categories of priority at 12 above will now apply to the allocation of all those places.

In the event that the applications for admission exceed the number of spaces available following the application of the priorities in the categories of allocation set out in 12 above, then places will be allocated by a lottery, in accordance with the priority ranking outlined above, until all places are filled. In that event, a lottery will also determine the allocation of places on the waiting list. The date, time and place of the lottery will be notified to applicants for that year in advance of same taking place and will only take place after the closing date for applications.

NOTE: for paragraph 12 above, a past pupil is a student who completed a minimum of five years education in Ovens N.S.

13. In a situation where the school offers a place in Junior Infants to a child, where the parents/guardians of that child feel it is in the child's best interests to defer admission for any reason, that child will, if it is the wish of his/her parents/guardians, be placed on the following year's admission list without needing to satisfy either date of application or lottery criteria. If the place was offered based on capacity because the school was not over-subscribed or if it was based on a lottery done in respect of children in categories 2 or 3 of paragraph 12 but the parents wish to defer the place in the best interests of the child, then that place will be offered to the child for the following year, without their name being again submitted to a lottery. This is to ensure that parents act in the best interests of the child in determining when is the right time to send that child to school rather than acting out of a need for a place in the school.

14. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Ovens National School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled (as set out above) and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Ovens National School is in the order of priority, assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria above, in accordance with this admission policy. Waiting lists for applications will be ranked by lottery.

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.

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.

16. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Ovens National 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

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.

17. 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 have the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Ovens National 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 are 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.

19. 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 Ovens National 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 18 above.

20. The board of management of Ovens N.S. revises this admission policy from time to time, in line with the needs of the school and its pupils, and reserves the right to do so as often as the board sees fit. The policy applicable to any and each child's admission shall be the most recent and up to date policy published and available to view through the Ovens N.S. Website <http://www.ovensns.com/> at the closing date for applications for a given year. The "closing date" means 17:00 hours on the 1st day of November of the school year preceding the school year to which the application for admission relates.

21. An information day for prospective parents is held each year that conditions allow. Parents and children come to the school, familiarise themselves with the school surroundings and are given all the information needed to be ready for the first of day of school. Uniform/tracksuit advice is given, lists of books, opening times, rules etc. are distributed and explained by the principal.

22. If the application for admission is successful, the pupil shall be enrolled as per the name of the official birth certificate, as per Rules for National Schools.

Other important information

1. Admission of Children with Special needs:

In relation to applications for the admission of children with special needs, it is open to the Board of Management to request a copy of the child's medical and / or psychological report. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to admission, request the Department of Education and Skills to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological or medical report. These resources may include, for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, special education teacher (S.E.T.), access to special needs' assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, facilities, transport services or other.

The school will meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs. If necessary, a full-case conference involving all parties will be held, which may include parents, principal, class teacher, S.E.T., psychologist, O.T. etc. as appropriate.

- Ovens NS will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.
- Ovens NS will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

2. Pupils Transferring to Ovens N.S.

The BOM will allow and facilitate the admission of pupils who wish to transfer to Ovens N.S. from another school at any time during the school year, subject to available space, the Rules for National Schools, the terms of this Admission Policy, and in some cases, the approval of the DES. The full terms and conditions applying to this Admission Policy will apply equally to all applicants seeking to transfer into Ovens N.S. but subject to the following amendments and variations. When deciding on admission transfer matters, the BOM has to have regard to relevant DES guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements/issues concerning accommodation, including physical space available, optimisation of the teaching/learning process, and the health and welfare of children, including their appropriate supervision. Having regard to these matters and to the current DES Staffing Schedule, the BOM will limit the total number of pupils to be enrolled in any class in Ovens N.S. Transfer of pupils into classes which are already full will not be facilitated. Parents who wish to transfer their child to Ovens N.S. from another school will be required to complete and present an application for admission on the official application form. If all required information and documentation is provided, then the child may be eligible to be enrolled in line with the above selection criteria and order of allocation priorities. If there is a space available in the class required, the child will be enrolled as per the guidelines outlined above. If a space is not available at the time of the application and provided all required information and documentation is provided, and the child is eligible to be enrolled per the allocation of places criteria above, then the application for admission will be retained on file until the beginning of the school year for which the child has applied in case a place becomes available.

To extend an application for admission beyond the limit of one year as referred to above, parents must submit a letter indicating that they wish to keep the application open for a further year.

It should be noted that the Education Welfare Act (2000) contains specific provisions in relation to the transfer of pupils, including the requirements that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress be communicated between schools. In addition, the parents will provide copies of all relevant school/assessment and attendance reports.

3. Code of Behaviour

Ovens N.S. Code of Behaviour (available on our school website) must be read in conjunction with this admission policy. Written acceptance by parents of the school's Code of Behaviour is a requirement of this admission policy. The BOM reserves the right to refuse a child's admission in Ovens N.S. if his/her parents/guardians refuse to accept the Code of Behaviour.

4. The school should be informed of any health problem which would affect the child's schooling and wellbeing e.g. allergies, epilepsy, asthma, sight, hearing, speech, fainting, infectious diseases, diabetes etc.
5. The school should be made aware of any court order which affects the child's welfare.
6. Parents/Guardians who do not wish their child/ward to attend religious education classes should state so, in writing, and either make their own private arrangements for their child's/ward's supervision during these times or give permission for the child to remain with the class doing other work, directed by the class teacher.

7. Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate with and support the School/Board of Management's Codes of Behaviour/Discipline as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. The BoM places parents/guardians responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way. In accordance with the Department of Education's rules for National Schools, a child may be suspended. These policies may be added to and revised from time to time.

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

The board of Ovens National 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 admission of a student in the school.

9. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent/guardian 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 parent/guardian 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 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).

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.

10. Data Protection

The school acknowledges its obligations as a data controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2018. Information obtained for the purposes of allocating places in the school to applicant children will be used and disclosed only in a manner which is compatible with this purpose. Only such personal data as are relevant and necessary for the performance of this function will be retained. The school undertakes to ensure that such information is processed fairly, that it is kept safe, secure, accurate, complete, and up-to-date. Individuals have the right to have any inaccurate information rectified or erased. All data submitted as part of the application process for children who are not subsequently enrolled in Ovens National School will be destroyed within 2 years of the deadline for receipt of application forms (as opposed to admission) forms. A copy of all personal data obtained and kept as part of the admissions process will be made available to the subject of such data on receipt of a written request to the chairperson of the board of management.

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.

Responsibility for development and implementation

This policy is publicly available on our school's website. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that this policy is implemented in the application and admission of all children in Ovens N.S.

Review Criteria

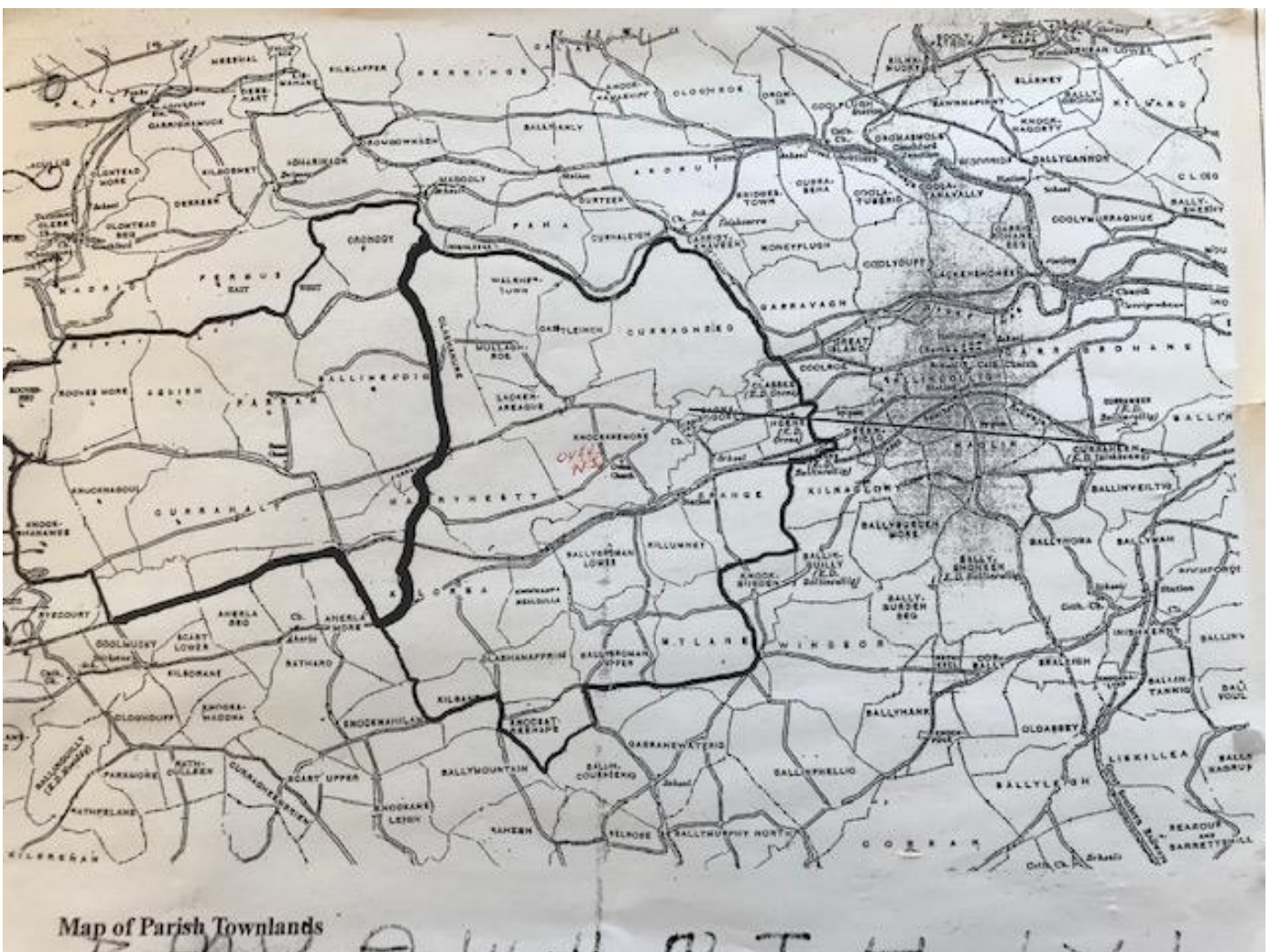
This policy is subject to review, as the need arises. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management of Ovens N.S. to ensure that this policy is reviewed as and when the need arises and at a minimum interval of three years from date hereof.

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on the 12th day of December 2022. Currently awaiting ratification from the Diocesan office.

Signed: 

Chairperson, Board of Management.

Appendix 1 Catchment area map



The townlands in Ovens Parish which constitute the catchment area for Ovens N.S. are; Ballygroman, Killumney, Grange, Beverly, Mylane, Knockatrinane, Kilbawn, Knockane, Clashanafirin, Desertmore, part of Kilcrea, Apsley, Knockanemore, Crannóg, Culban, Carrigane, part of Garryhesta, Classis, Barnangore, Lisheens, Currabeg, Castleinch, Walshestown, Brownhill, Lackenreague, Srelane, Clashanure, Grange Manor Estate, Fernwalk and Oldcourt.