



## St. Patrick's National School

### Admissions Policy for Mainstream and Special Classes

Address: Harestown, Monasterboice Drogheda, County Louth.

Roll No.: 19223B

School Patron: Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin

#### Introduction

The Board of Management of St. Patrick's National School hereby sets out its Admissions Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998 and the Education Welfare Act, 2000, the Equal Status Act, 2004 and the Disabilities Act, 2002 and other relevant legislation and circulars. The Board trusts that in doing so, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. Furthermore, the Board of Management and the principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 25/09/2025 (DD/MM/YYYY). 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 Saint Patrick's 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 online application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available on request.

#### Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Saint Patrick's National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Armagh. The school comprises mainstream classes and two special classes.

"Catholic ethos " in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos an 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 aspect; and
- b) A living relationship with God and with other people; and
- 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 such 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 Saint Patrick's National 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.

In Saint Patrick's National School

- We aim to provide each individual child with an education in a caring, safe and happy environment.
- We aim to teach the values of faith, hope, tolerance, respect, charity and love.
- We aim to work in partnership with parents, the local community and other agencies to develop a sense of worth in each child.
- We will maintain a Catholic ethos in our school but will respect the faiths and beliefs of other traditions.
- We will prepare each child for further education and endeavour to develop his/her talents to the best of their abilities.
- We will promote the well-being of our children at all times.

### **Admission Statement**

Saint Patrick's 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.

Saint Patrick's National 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 student a person who is not Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Saint Patrick's National School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) 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.

Saint Patrick's National School 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.

## **Admissions Policy and Procedure for Mainstream Classes**

### **Admission of students to mainstream classes**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 5](#) below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

Saint Patrick's National School is a Roman Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Roman Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

### **Oversubscription**

In the event that the mainstream classes are 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.

1. Siblings of children currently or previously enrolled in the school.
2. Children whose primary or care (children in care) residence is within the traditional catchment area of the school. This area is defined by Killineer and Listoke and Townrath to the south, Barnattin, Coolfore, Bawntaaffe and Maidens Cross to the west, Bankerstown and Gaulstown to the north and Kellystown, Galroostown, Tullyard and Cartown to the east.

3. Children of staff members.
4. Children from within the catchment area of the Drogheda and Dunleer education areas, as defined by the map on the Department of Education website.
5. Children from outside the area named at point 4, above.

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:

- Available places will be granted to the eldest children who qualify under that criteria and in the event of children being tied on this criteria (same date of birth) all children tied will be offered a place.

### **1. 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 a pre-school or pre-school service.
- b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school except where a sibling is enrolled or was previously enrolled in the school
- g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school, 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.

### **2. Decisions on applications for mainstream classes**

All decisions on applications for admission to Saint Patrick's NS will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

### **3. 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).

### **4. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant for mainstream classes**

In accepting an offer of admission from Saint Patrick's 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 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.

### **5. 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 Saint Patrick's 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 10](#) above.

### **6. 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;
- (iv) 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).

#### **7. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription of mainstream classes**

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 Saint Patrick's NS were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Saint Patrick's National 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.

#### **8. 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 12.

#### **14. Procedures for admission of students to other years before the commencement of 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

- Application forms are available from the school office or from the school website

- Reports and any other relevant documents from their previous school must be supplied
- The parent(s) of the student must confirm in writing, in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 that the schools code of behaviour is acceptable to him/her and that she/he will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by the student.

The criteria laid out in section 5 will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places.

### **15. Procedures for admission of students during the 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:

- Application forms are available from the school office or from the school website
- Reports and any other relevant documents from their previous school must be supplied
- The parent(s) of the student must confirm in writing, in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 that the schools code of behaviour is acceptable to him/her and that she/he will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by the student.

The criteria laid out in section 5 will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places and no waiting list.

### **16. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees**

The board of Saint Patrick's 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 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 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.

### **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 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.

## **Admissions Policy and Procedure for Special Classes**

### **Introduction:**

The Board of Management of St. Patrick's National School hereby sets out its Admissions Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998 and the Education Welfare Act, 2000, the Equal Status Act, 2004 and the Disabilities Act, 2002 and other relevant legislation and circulars. The Board trusts that in doing so, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. Furthermore, the Board of Management and the principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

St. Patrick's National School is a co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh. It currently has two special classes.

### **Aim:**

We aim to offer a specific learning environment within a mainstream national school that will meet the individual needs of pupils with autism and facilitate the optimum inclusion of the children as part of our school community.

### **Eligibility Criteria for placement in a Special Class:**

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report)

AND

- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.

### **Application Process for enrolment in the Special Class:**

The following is the process to apply for a place in the special class:

- Parents/guardians must notify the NCSE that their child requires a special class place by October 1<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to entry into the special class. Parents can do this via the NCSE website <https://ncse.ie/notify-ncse-special-class-special-school>
- Parents/guardians engaging with this process will be provided with a letter from the NCSE confirming the outcome of the NCSE's review of the supporting evidence provided which they can then give to the school/s as part of their application for enrolment in a special class.

- On receipt of the NCSE letter, parents/guardians must submit this together with an application for enrolment form as provided by the school.
- Parents/guardians must indicate on the application for enrolment form that they wish their child to be considered for a place in the special class.
- The child must be at least four years of age prior to September 1<sup>st</sup> on the year of enrolment.

#### **Admissions Procedures:**

Enrolment in the Special Class is subject to places being available and will be offered subject to the criteria listed under **Class Size**. There will be a maximum of six pupils in the class. The process of enrolling in the Special Class will be aligned with the time-frame for enrolment to the mainstream class.

- When an enquiry is made regarding the Special Class, the school will advise parents to notify the NCSE that their child requires a special class place.
- When applications for enrolment are being accepted, any parent who wishes to apply must submit a letter from the NCSE confirming that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism at the time of application.
- On receipt of this letter, parents will be invited to submit an application to the school, indicating on the application form that they wish their child to be considered for the special class. All relevant professional reports must be included at this stage.
- When the period for accepting applications for enrolment has ended, the school admission team (Principal and Deputy Principal) will review the applications. Offers will be made subject to the required criteria being met and places being available.
- Offers for places will be made within one month of the closing date for receipt of applications for enrolment.
- When a place has been offered in the Special Class, it is a requirement of the school that confirmation of acceptance of the place is given in writing by the parents/guardians within two weeks of the offer. If the places is not accepted within that timeframe, it will be offered to the next pupil on the waiting list.
- A notification of enrolment will be sent to the school's Special Education Needs Organiser.

#### **Class Size:**

The Special Class will be limited to a maximum of six pupils, as per the Department of Education guidelines. It may transpire that in some school years there will be no special class places available in the school. Where places are available and the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places, the following criteria will apply in the following priority order:

1. Siblings of children currently or previously enrolled in the school.
2. Children whose primary or care (children in care) residence is within the school's traditional catchment area, as defined in the school admission policy.
3. Children of staff members.
4. Children from within the catchment area of the Drogheda and Dunleer education areas, as defined by the map on the Department of Education website.
5. Children outside the area named at point 4, above.

Where two or more children are tied for an available place, the place will be offered to the child living closest to the school as determined by Google maps. A waiting list for available places will be established for the school year. Unsuccessful applicants will need to reapply for the following year.

### **Late Applicants**

Late applications will be accepted and will be allocated a place, if available, or will be placed at the end of the waiting list.

### **Integration**

The level of integration into a mainstream class for curriculum subjects will be determined on an individual basis, which will differ from child to child, and will be decided in consultation with the teaching team and parents/guardians. Where appropriate, a pupil may participate in various lessons and join their peers in the equivalent mainstream classroom. Children will be assigned a class level where they will be integrated for some subjects (if appropriate) and recreation times.

### **Reverse Integration**

Where appropriate, and with full permission from parents/guardians, children from a mainstream class may integrate into the special class for some activities.

### **Discharge from the Special Class**

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the Special Class on their associated class level having completed an eight year primary school programme or on having reached their 12<sup>th</sup> birthday within the school year. The responsibility will be on parents/guardians to procure a suitable secondary school placement for their child. St. Patrick's NS will facilitate the transfer of relevant documents and files, subject to parental permission being obtained.

Discharge may be recommended if the pupil is fully integrated into a mainstream class within the school.

Discharge may be recommended by the Board of Management if the school, following consultation with parents/guardians, feel that the placement is not appropriate to meet the child's needs.

### **Code of Behaviour**

All pupils in the school are subject to the school's Code of Behaviour. Where necessary, a behaviour plan will be implemented for an individual child to manage some behaviours. This will be drawn up in consultation with the child's parents/guardians, teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) and the school principal. At all times, the safety and wellbeing of all our children and staff is paramount.

### **School Support Plans**

School Support Plans (SSPs) will be drawn up to meet the needs of each child. Parents/guardians will be invited to the school to review and discuss their child's education plan. It is expected that parents/guardians will attend these meetings at all times. Other personnel, such as an SNA or educational psychologist may also be involved in the formulation of a School Support Plan. Such plans will be formulated at the beginning of a school year and may be reviewed at the discretion of the teacher.

### **Evaluation**

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of this policy. This policy will be amended and updated as required.

### **Ratification and Review:**

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of St. Patrick's NS on 23/09/2025. (DD/MM/YYYY)

Signed: Philip Tuohy  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 23/09/2025

Signed: Amanda Rowland  
School Principal

Date: 23/09/2025

### **Approval and Review Procedure**

This policy will be reviewed every 3-years by the principal, staff (under the guidance of the principal) and by the BOM.

Our admission notice will be reviewed annually by the principal, staff and BOM.

### **Approved**

Signed: Niamh Black

Date: 25/09/2025

Niamh Black (Education secretary, Archdiocese of Armagh on behalf of the Patron Archbishop Eamon Martin).