

St. Mary's Primary School
Youghal Road ,
Dungarvan,
Co. Waterford

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SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction:

The Board of Management of St. Mary's Primary School is setting out, in this statement, the policy of the school, in regard to enrolment and admission of children to the school, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998.

The Board trusts that this statement of policy will be of assistance to parents and guardians in relation to enrolment and admission matters.

The Board also wishes to state that the Chairperson and the Principal of the school will be willing to clarify any matters arising from this policy statement.

PART 1. THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

(a) The school profile.

The school is a Catholic Primary school, which caters for boys From Junior Infants to First class and girls from Junior Infants to Sixth class. It operates under the patronage of the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore, under the Trusteeship of the Presentation Sisters, and it fully supports the religious and educational philosophy of the foundress, Nano Nagle. The school is managed by a Board of Management, is funded by the Dept. of Education and Science (DES), and operates within the guidelines and regulations set down from time to time by that Department.

(b) The ethos of the school.

The school recognises the central role of the family as the primary educator of the child. The school also accepts and supports the constitutional right and duty of the parents to provide for the religious, moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children.

The school aims to provide the best possible environment to cater for the cultural, educational, moral, physical, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions of all its students, with the resources available to it. The focus of the school philosophy is the education of the whole child to reach her/his full potential. We show special concern for the disadvantaged, respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each person. Conscious of the legacy of Nano Nagle, our school upholds the values and principles of a Christian education in the Catholic tradition. Working together as a school community, the Board of Management, Principal, staff, parents and pupils will strive to provide an environment, which will allow all students to develop to their maximum potential and fulfil their role in society.

(c) Brief history of the school.

St. Mary's Primary School came into being on September 1st, 1990, following the amalgamation of the Presentation and Mercy primary schools. The Presentation sisters became trustees of the primary school. The primary school campus included the existing Presentation primary school buildings and the building previously occupied by the Presentation secondary school. In 1997 a new entrance was opened on the Youghal Road.

(d) Our mission statement.

St. Mary's Primary School, Dungarvan is a Catholic school in the diocese of Waterford and Lismore. We are committed to creating a warm, happy atmosphere where all work together in a spirit of co-operation, openness and trust.

We aim to:

- *Foster good Christian values and practice*
- *Respect the right of every child to a holistic education whereby they discover and develop their individual gifts*
- *Develop a sense of self discipline and respect that will lead to each pupil achieving to the best of their ability*

- *Encourage respect and awareness of others and the environment*
- *Work as a community – teachers, parents, pupils and Board of Management – in a spirit of mutual respect and openness*
- *Be aware of and respect the individuality of each other while supporting and sharing*

In this way the school will function as a community which is independent, mutually supportive and fully inclusive, where each member of that community is equally important.

PART 2. OPERATING CONTEXT.

- The school operates within the context and parameters of the DES regulations and programmes.
- The school recognises the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act of 1998, (Section 15, (1) and (2)).
- The school accepts and supports the religious and educational philosophy of the Presentation Sisters.
- The school recognises that it is limited by the funding and resources available to it.

Within this context, the school supports the following underlying principles:

inclusiveness, especially with reference to the enrolment of pupils with a disability or other special educational needs

equality of access and participation in the school.

parental choice in relation to selection of school, having regard for the characteristic spirit of that school.

respect for diversity of beliefs, traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life.

School Resources.

The financial resources of the school are provided by a combination of DES grants, capitation grants, voluntary contributions and fund-raising. The teaching resources are provided by the DES teacher allocation – currently 20 teachers.

The implementation of the school's admission policy must have due regard to the financial and teaching resources of the school.

The school operates within the rules and regulations set down from time to time by the DES. It also follows the curricular programme prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time by the DES, in accordance with the Education Act 1998, (Sections 9 and 30).

PART 3. SCHOOL DETAILS

Opening Times : Junior & Senior Infants: 8.50 a.m. – 1.30 p.m.
1st – 6th Classes: 8.50 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.

If there is any deviation from the usual times of opening or closing, for any reason, parents or guardians will receive prior notice of adjusted times.

School Uniform: Pupils in all classes from Junior Infants to Sixth class must wear the school uniform, this consists of the following:-

<u>Girls:</u> Bottle Green Pinafore or Skirt OR Grey Trousers	<u>Boys:</u> Grey Trousers
Bottle Green Jumper with School Crest	As Girls Uniform
White Blouse and School Tie	As Girls Uniform
Bottle Green OR White Socks	Shoe (NOT RUNNERS)
FLAT Shoes (NOT RUNNERS)	

P.E. Uniform: Bottle Green Tracksuit
Red Top
Runners

P.E. uniform and runners **ONLY** be worn on P.E/Football Days

The School Calendar : The school calendar is drawn up at the beginning of each school year/term.

Parents or guardians will be supplied with a copy of the calendar. If the calendar has to be adjusted for any reason, parents or guardians will be informed.

The School Curriculum :

The school follows the curricular programme set down by the Department of Education and Science, which includes the subjects Religion, Irish, English, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Visual Arts, Drama, Science, Social Physical Health Education, Music, Information Technology.

Extra-curricular activities :

The school provides a wide range of artistic, sporting, social and cultural activities, which helps to develop the talents of the pupils. This provides them with the ability and confidence to be involved in various activities in later life. Development through team games is greatly encouraged in the school.

Extra-curricular activities include Gaelic Football, Camogie, Athletics, Music classes, Homework Club, Quizzes, Library.

Parent-Teacher Meetings :

Formal Parent-Teacher meetings are held once a year in November or February. Parents or guardians will receive prior notice of the meetings. All parents/guardians are strongly urged to attend, in the best interest of the child.

School Functions :

Parents or guardians are welcome to attend at the various functions and meetings held during the year. Parents or guardians will be notified well in advance. These meetings are usually held in the evening.

The following is a sample of what can take place during the year:

Sport for All Day	Opening of School Year Mass
Carol Service and/or Nativity Play.	Graduation ceremony.
Open Day	Concert

Fund-Raising :

It is necessary for the school to arrange fund-raising events to supplement funding from the Department of Education and Science and other official grants, in order to maintain a high level of service to the needs of our pupils. Parents and guardians are therefore urged to support all our fund-raising efforts, which include

Sponsored Run	Table Quiz	Cake Sale
Spellathon	Sponsored Readathon	Family Euro

Parents' Association :

The school has a vibrant, active, voluntary Parents' Association, which meets every month in the school. The association helps to promote the development of the students, and assists with various school activities. The Association can be contacted through the School Office. (058-41346)

PART 4. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

The school welcomes all students and aims to provide an integrated and inclusive education.

(A) Application for admission:

Application for enrolment in the school is made by completing the school's application form, and returning it to the School Office.

The application form is available from the School Office.

The completed application form, an original birth certificate (and baptismal certificate where appropriate) must be accompanied by confirmation, in writing, that the parent or guardian and applicant accept the Code of Behaviour of the school.

Applications for enrolment for the next school year are made at any time in the preceding school year.

Parents/guardians will be informed of their child's acceptance or refusal within 21 days of that date.

The school makes provision for late applications.

(B) Enrolment:

Except in exceptional circumstances, children will be enrolled on application.

Successful applicants will be informed of their acceptance. Parents or guardians are then required to confirm their acceptance of a place in the school for their child.

Successful applicants may be asked to attend at the school on a given date, for the purpose of assessment, in order to identify, and plan for, the educational needs of the pupils.

Successful applicants and parents/guardians will be invited to an Induction Day in the school.

Junior Infants should be 4 by May 1st in the year of their enrolment.

(C) Excess Applications:

The criteria for deciding on acceptance or refusal of applications, where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, is set down below in an open, transparent and fair manner.

1. Siblings of pupils already enrolled in the school. (This includes foster / step brothers / sisters).
2. Children of current school staff.
3. The applicant's parent/guardian is a past pupil.
4. Children resident within the parish boundaries.
5. Children with special needs or who are newcomers to Ireland for whom special representation has been made on their behalf from agencies/individuals.
6. Children living outside the Parish boundary.

(D) Special Needs Applicants:

The school welcomes applications for admission of pupils with special educational needs and will provide for these children insofar as resources allow, taking in to account the common good of the school community.

The school will use the personnel and financial resources provided by the DES, to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs, up to a nominal cost.

The school aims to identify, at an early stage, any applicant for admission who has special needs, and to become familiar with the specific needs of the child.

In making provision for children with special needs, the school needs to know if the child has had access to

1. A special needs assistant
2. A special class
3. Help, for specific needs, from any resource teacher
4. Assistance with behaviour modification
5. Psychological assessment
6. Any additional resources to help with special needs
7. Help in areas including visual impairment, hearing impairment, learning disability or emotional disturbance.
8. Any resource in relation to travel or mobility

If an expert report is provided, it should include workable strategies for addressing the needs of the child, allowing for the resources available.

If no expert report is available, the school will request immediate assessment, in order to determine the educational needs of the child.

Having gathered all the relevant information available, the Board of Management will assess how the needs of the child can be met.

The DES will be requested in writing to provide additional resources, if such are needed.

It may be necessary for the Board to defer enrolment, pending the receipt of assessment reports and/or the provision of appropriate resources by the DES.

The school will meet the parents to discuss the needs of the child and the capability of the school to meet these needs.

In exceptional cases, final acceptance of an applicant will depend on the additional resources being provided by the DES.

Parents or guardians of children with special needs are strongly advised to make early application to the school, to allow time to follow the procedures outlined above.

As soon as possible, but not later than 21 days after a parent or guardian has provided the relevant information, the Board of Management shall decide on the application concerned,

and inform the parents or guardian in writing of their decision. (Educational Welfare Act 2000, Section 19, 3.)

(E) Transfer of pupils from other schools:

Pupils from other schools may transfer into the school at any time subject to the following conditions.

The transfer is in accordance with the school's admission policy.

The school is satisfied with the reasons for the transfer.

The transfer is in the best interest of the pupil.

All relevant information from the former school is made available.

Space is available in the school to facilitate the transfer.

The Educational Welfare Officer is consulted, if necessary.

(F) Decision-making Process:

Decisions in relation to admissions are made by the Board of Management, in accordance with school admissions policy.

The Board will have regard for the relevant conditions prescribed by the DES concerning class size, staffing provisions, accommodation, physical space, health and welfare of children and eligibility for admission.

The Board reserves the right to refuse an application for admission, in exceptional circumstances, as stated in the Education Act of 1998, (Section 29) e.g. (a) The pupil has needs such that, even with additional resources available from the DES, the school cannot meet such needs and / or provide the pupil with an appropriate education or (b) In the opinion of the BoM, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff and / or school property.

(G) The right of appeal:

Parents or guardians have the right to appeal a refusal by the Board to admit their child.

The Board's decision will be given in writing and the reason for the refusal will be clearly stated.

The parents or guardians will be informed of their right to appeal the decision, and will be supplied with the Appeals Application Form. (Circular 22/02). The appeal will be made to The General Secretary, Appeals Administration Unit, Department of Education and Science, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, on the relevant form. The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents or guardians concerned. (Circular 22/02). The school must be informed in writing of the decision to appeal.

(H) Documentation:

When applying for admission of their child to the school, parents or guardians will receive the following documentation:

1. The Admissions Policy Statement of the school.
2. A copy of the Code of Behaviour and Discipline of the school
3. The standard Application Form of the school.

Parents and guardians should note that the school has adopted policy statements in other areas of interest and concern, towards the best running of the school and the maximum development of the pupils.

These policy statements can be accessed in the School Office on request. They include:

1. The Health and Safety Statement
2. The Anti-bullying Statement
3. The School Plan.

This document states the Admissions Policy of our school at the present time. It may, however, be subject to adjustments and changes in the future. Such changes and adjustments will be contained in an updated version of the school's Admissions Policy.