

Our Lady of Mercy National School
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June 2014

Title of Policy:
Our Lady of Mercy National School Enrolment Policy

Introductory Statement:

This policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998. A review was undertaken using the Catholic Primary School Managers Association suggestion document/template (February 2011) due to a change in status it was modified in June 2014. A draft review document was distributed to staff members and Board of Management members.

The school is a Roman Catholic School under the patronage of the Bishop of Waterford & Lismore Diocese. As Roman Catholic School, we aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the child: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God. The school provides Religious Education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Roman Catholic Faith.

Mission Statement:

This policy is linked to other relevant policies in operation within the school, in particular our Code of Behaviour Policy and our Ethos Statement.

We provide the children of the community with an open friendly secure learning environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical and emotional needs of the pupils are identified and nurtured by a dedicated teaching staff.

We foster an appreciation of culture, language, history and traditions in the children.

We strive to provide a well-ordered, happy, secure atmosphere in the school where the self esteem of each child will be enhanced. We aim to foster a strong sense of community involving children, school staff, parents and the wider community of Stradbally.

We recognise that the parents are the primary educators of their children. The school aims to collaborate with them in their child's balanced growth and development.

Rationale:

This policy is necessary to enable the school Board of Management to decide on enrolment applications.

Aims:

- To ensure clarity and transparency
- To inform parents of enrolment procedures
- To provide background information in relation to the school
- To inform parents of our mission Statement.

General Information:

The name of the school is Our Lady of Mercy National School. It is located at Carrigahilla, outside the village of Stradbally in County Waterford. The school is a

Roman Catholic School under the patronage of the Bishop of Waterford & Lismore Diocese.

The school caters for boys and girls from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. It is a three-teacher school, with two class teachers and a Learning Support Teacher.

Notwithstanding the above, equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accent, gender, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances.

The school operates under the grants, teacher resources and accommodation provided by the Department of Education and Skills, and is governed by regulations laid down by that Department. School policy has regard to the teacher resources, accommodation and funding available.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

Application Procedure:

- Parents seeking to enrol their child are requested to return a completed application form (available from the school office) with a copy of a Birth / Adoption Certificate, before the 30th April.
- Admission to Junior Infants normally takes place on the first day of the academic year. Any child who has not reached his/her fourth birthday cannot be enrolled.
- In the case of applications to classes other than Junior Infants, the school provides for enrolment at any time during the school year.
- Where the school reasonably requires further information, the application will not be treated as being complete until such time as all the requested information has been received.

Decision Making Procedure:

The Board of Management of the school will make a decision within 21 days of receipt of a completed application. This decision will be notified in writing.

Enrolment Criteria:

In situations where there is oversubscription (more applications than places available) the following priority order will apply:

1. Sisters and/or brothers of pupils currently in the school.
2. Catholic children living within the parish boundary.
3. Catholic children living outside the parish boundary who do not have a Catholic school within their own parish boundary.
4. Other children living within the parish boundary.
5. Other children living outside the parish boundary.
6. In the event that there are more applicants within any category than there are places available places, priority will be given to children within the particular category in order of age, starting with the oldest.

Children with Special Needs:

All relevant information and reports should be given to the school to support the application, thereby enabling the Board of Management to make a prompt and informed decision. Enrolment of children with special educational needs cannot be deferred or

postponed until additional resources have been approved or allocated by the Department of Education or Special Education Needs Officer.

Refusal to enrol on grounds of “Exceptional Circumstances”:

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment in exceptional circumstances as follows:

1. Where a child has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education & Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education.
2. Where, in the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff and/or school property.

Right of Appeal:

Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 provides for a right of appeal against a decision to refuse enrolment.

Any decision to refuse to enrol will be communicated by letter to the applicant by the Principal Teacher. This letter will also inform the applicant of their right to appeal the decision either to the Board of Management and to the Department of Education & Skills (Section 29), or to both above.

In the event of a response from the school being necessary to an Appeals Committee, such response will be the responsibility of the Principal Teacher.

Pupil Transfer:

A child may transfer to the school at any time subject to the terms of this enrolment policy and available space.

In relation to pupil transfer from this school to another school, the legal obligation to share information in relation to attendance and educational progress has effect only when the child has been put on the register of the second school and not before. Any sharing of information prior to registration could be in breach of Data Protection legislation.

Review:

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis (during term one) by the Board of Management.

Approval of Patron:

This policy has been approved by the Patron.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management. A copy of this document has been dated and retained with the minutes of the particular meeting.

Communication / Circulation of Policy

The Education Act 1998 requires the Board of Management to publish this policy. As decided by the Board of Management, this policy will be available online on the school website at www.ourladyofmercyns.ie. In addition, a printed copy of same will be given to parents prior to application, and to parents of existing pupils on request.