

St. Mary's Parish Primary School

Bryanstown, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92 DP86.

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Príomhoide – Philip Ward • Leas Phríomhoide – John Weir • Roll No.: 20205G

ENROLMENT POLICY

The Board of Management of St. Mary's Parish Primary School is setting out this policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. We the Board of Management trust that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters, and the Board of Management and principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school.

General Information:

This school serves the people who reside within the geographical area of the Catholic Parish of St. Mary's, Drogheda. It is a parish based school with a Catholic ethos. It has been established with the Minister of Education and Skills, having as its Patron the Bishop of Meath. It aims at promoting the full harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil – 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 and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of pupils in the Catholic Faith.

School Name: St. Mary's Parish Primary School, Bryanstown, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92 DP86

Roll No: 20205G

Contact Details: Tel. (041) 9845374
email: office@smpps.ie

Patron: Bishop Michael Smith

Denomination: Catholic School

Classes: Mixed sex vertical school

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. The school enrolment policy must have regard to the resources and funding available.

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

Application Procedures: *(The principal acts on behalf of the BOM to ensure these procedures are followed).*

1. Admission to the school is, of course, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources, and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission. Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources – where the resources cannot be secured, the school reserves the unfettered right to refuse admission. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians of any child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form for the child's own welfare. In this context, the school authorities will have equal regard for the welfare of all the students and their right to an education in an atmosphere that is not detrimental to their physical, emotional, moral, social or intellectual development. Failure to fully complete the application form or failure to supply any relevant information requested by the authorities to consider the application may result in a child being refused admission into the school.
2. Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in St. Mary's Parish Primary School are requested to return a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the office and online) with an original Birth / Adoption Certificate, to the school. **Applicants will be required to provide evidence of address** e.g. a current utility bill. Receipt of an application merely confirms that it will be assessed under the criteria outlined in this policy, and does not confer any further status on that application.
3. The processing of Junior Infant applications for September 2018 will begin at **12.00pm on 19th January 2018**. This date will be published within the school community, on the school website and in the parish bulletin. All fully completed applications received by this date will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy. All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome within 21 days of the initial deadline (or within 21 days of a later application), and if refused admission will be notified of their entitlement to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Unsuccessful applicants may opt to leave their names on a list for places which might subsequently become available, but must confirm this in writing to the school. If at any later date subsequent places arise due to an offer of a place being declined or a cancellation, the school will again apply its enrolment criteria to all on the waiting list plus any fully completed applications received **by that later date**.
4. Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the Rules governing National Schools, as well as our own school's enrolment policy. Pupils may transfer to the school during the school year subject to school policy, available space and in some cases the approval of the DES. The Education Welfare Act (2000) contains some specific provisions in relation to the transfer of pupils, including the requirement that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress should be communicated between schools. All fully completed applications received by the school on or before the date that place(s) become available will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy. **In classes from Senior Infants up, date of application replaces age when prioritising pupils within any category for enrolment.**

Enrolment Criteria:

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

2. While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management (BOM) of St. Mary's Parish Primary School 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. Accordingly, the BOM reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children 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
 - d. presence of children with special educational/ behavioural needs
 - e. DES maximum class average directives
 - f. **Our maximum class size is 28**
3. The BOM is bound by the DES rules for National Schools which provide that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and up.
4. In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class / standard exceeding the number of places available preceding or during the school year the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment, and in the following order:
 - a. Children living within the geographical area of St. Mary's Parish, sisters and brothers of pupils attending the school and children of current staff, including ancillary staff;
 - b. Children living outside the catchment area;

In the event that the numbers of pupils seeking enrolment in Junior Infants from within any category exceeds the number of available places then the school will offer places on an age basis, oldest first.

Pupils must be 4 years of age by 1st September in the year in which they start school.

1. Notwithstanding the availability of resources, parents of children with special needs who are dissatisfied with the level of educational provision in our school are advised to consider a special school which is designed and resourced to specifically cater for the needs of children with special educational needs.
2. Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate with and support the School/ Board of Management's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation, and management. The BOM places the responsibility on Parents / Guardians for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way.

Code of Behaviour:

An agreement signed by the parents/guardians to abide by the Code of Behaviour must be returned in advance of enrolment.

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs:

In the case of a child with specific special educational needs, the B.O.M. may request copies of medical and/or psychological reports in order to assess the school's suitability and capability to appropriately provide for the education of the child. In such cases, a meeting will be held with the child's parents/ guardians. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the needs of the child.

Following this meeting and on receipt of all relevant reports, the B.O.M. will assess how the school can meet the needs identified. Application where necessary will be made to the

Special Educational Needs Organiser for additional resources before the required closing date for resource allocation for the year of enrolment.

These resources may include for example, access to, or the provision of, any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other. If necessary, a full-case conference involving all parties may be held.

Exceptional Circumstances:

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

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

The parents of any pupil who has been refused enrolment, for any reason, are entitled to appeal that refusal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and in such circumstances, will be advised in writing of their entitlement to such an appeal.

Appeal against Enrolment Decision (Section 29 Education Act)

1. Parents who are unhappy with an enrolment decision may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal and lodged within ten days of receiving the final refusal.
2. If unhappy with the outcome of the appeal to the BOM, they may appeal to the Department of Education and Skills on the official form provided by the Department. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of the final refusal from the school.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 15th January 2018 and will be reviewed in September 2018.

On behalf of the Board of Management,
Anne Phillips,
Chairperson