

St. Mary's Parish Primary School

Bryanstown, Drogheda, Co. Louth.

Telephone: 041-9845374 • Email: office@smpps.ie • Web: www.smpps.ie



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 in the 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.

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 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:

1. Admissions 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, for state purposes and a Baptismal Certificate for Church purposes to the school. A current utility bill will be required as evidence of address.
3. The names of children for whom Enrolment Application forms have been returned, will be placed on a class waiting list.
4. The deadline for registration is usually in late February and will be published in the school community and parish bulletin. Receipt of an application merely confirms that it will be assessed under the criteria outlined, and does not confer any further status on that application. Applications will be considered in early March of the relevant enrolment year, and will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy. Following this evaluation, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board, listing proposed enrolments for the forthcoming year. Once an enrolment list is approved by the Board, all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome, and if refused admission will be notified of their entitlement to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
5. 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 behaviour record of a student in their previous school shall be considered as will their attendance. 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.
6. An Enrolment Day for parents of children who have been offered places will be held in May. On that day, new Junior Infants will spend a period in school to familiarise themselves with their new environment.

Enrolment Criteria:

1. 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.
2. While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of St. Mary's Parish Primary School is also responsible to respect 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. Assisting the school in such circumstances, 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
3. The BOM is bound by the DES rules for National Schools which provides 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. Catholic children living within the catchment area**, and sisters and brothers of pupils attending St. Mary's BNS and Scoil Mhuire Fatima.
 - b. Children of current staff, including ancillary staff;
 - c. Catholic children living outside the catchment area who do not have a Catholic school within their own parish boundary;
 - d. Other children living within the catchment area;
 - e. Other children living outside the catchment area;
 - f. In the event that priority will be required to be given to children within any one of the above categories, older children will be given priority.
 - g. It is proposed to enrol a maximum of 150 pupils for the school year 2012/2013.

*** (The catchment area is defined as St Mary's Parish and, due to the historical location of the former Congress Avenue School, the estates of Marian Park, Marian Court and Hillbrook Drive. Please note that for the intake for September 2016 the catchment will revert to the Parish boundaries.)*

5. In the event that the numbers of pupils seeking enrolment from categories a, b and c exceeds the numbers of pupils for a single class then the school will apply a cut off for enrolment based on age i.e. pupils will be offered 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.
6. Notwithstanding the availability of resources, parents of children who are unsatisfied 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.
7. 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:

Parents/guardians who apply to enrol their children will be given a copy of the schools' 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:

- 1) In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs, the Board of Management, will require a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, will request that the child be assessed immediately.
- 2) 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.

- 3) Following receipt of the report, the board shall assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report. Where the board deems that further resources are required, it will 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.
- 4) 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.
- 5) The school will meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If necessary, a full-case conference involving all parties should be held, which may include parents, principal, class teacher, learning support teacher, special class teacher, resource teacher for special needs or psychologist, as appropriate.

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, should 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 this appeal, they may then appeal to the Dept. 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 will be reviewed in January 2013.

Board of Management of St. Mary's Parish Primary School, Bryanstown, Drogheda, Co. Louth