

Admissions Policy

School: St. John the Evangelist NS, Adamstown

School Patron: Catholic Archbishop of Dublin

School Enrolment/Admissions Policy

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on May 24th 2023. 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 St. John the Evangelist NS 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 application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St John the Evangelist N.S is a Roman Catholic Co-Educational School under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of its students i.e. their intellectual, physical, cultural, moral, social, linguistic and spiritual attributes, regardless of their faith, beliefs or backgrounds. St. John the Evangelist NS is committed to the holistic development of all students, preparing them to reach their full potential and to play a full and active role in their community. The school is an inclusive, multi-cultural school that cherishes all children equally. St. John the Evangelist NS strives to provide a safe and happy learning environment for all children.

Our school has a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. Catholic Ethos in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and 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 aspects; 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 students in the Catholic faith, and which school provides religious education

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for the students in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or 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 St. John the Evangelist NS 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.

St. John the Evangelist NS strives to provide a holistic, caring, happy and safe environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the children are catered for, where each child is afforded an equal opportunity of an education. St. John the Evangelist NS recognises the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. We recognise the value of strong home school relationships and are committed to the full development of these relationships.

The school provides Religious Education for Catholic students in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church as outlined above. Non-Catholic students may be exempted from the religious education programme at the request of their parents. (see section 17 of this policy)

3. Admission Statement

St. John the Evangelist NS 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

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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.

St. John the Evangelist NS will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation 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, provided the NCSE has allocated the necessary resources to fulfil the educational and individual needs of said children.

St. John the Evangelist NS will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

All denominational schools

St. John the Evangelist NS 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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

St. John the Evangelist NS have one special class for supporting children with ASD which was established on 1/9/2021. The purpose of this class is to support children with ASD, who are experiencing, or would experience, difficulty in a mainstream class setting, to access the curriculum and maximise their potential for learning and personal development. The class also serves to prepare children with ASD to re-integrate into the mainstream school setting.

Our current ASD class is mandated by the Department of Education with recommendation by the NCSE to cater for three students. It is important to note that as of September 2022 the unit is at full capacity due to the limited resources allocated by the Department. The school will liaise with parents who apply to our fully subscribed ASD class.

Where a vacancy presents itself in our ASD class, the Board of Management reserve the right to give priority to students currently enrolled in St. John the Evangelist NS mainstream classes who are entitled to a placement in an ASD class (Section 5, E).

The school will promote the integration of students with Special Educational Needs as outlined by the Disability Act 2005 and supports the principles of:

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- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with disability or other Special Educational Needs.
- Equality of access and participation in the school.
- Respect of the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

The Board of Management shall request a copy of the child's medical and/or psycho-educational report(s) or where these reports are not available will request that the child be assessed. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relative to his/her disability or special needs and to plan the support services required. The Board will determine how the school can meet the needs specified in the report and request further support provision from the Department of Education and Science and the NCSE.

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- A) The school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 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.
- C) St. John the Evangelist NS is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
- D) The special class attached to St. John the Evangelist NS provides an education exclusively for students with ASD and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class or where the class is fully subscribed.
- E) A vacancy presents itself in our ASD class and where there are students, who are entitled to an ASD placement and with supporting documentation, currently within the mainstream class setting of St. John the Evangelist NS.

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6. Oversubscription

The Board of Management of St. John the Evangelist NS determine that to ensure the effective provision of education within the school under the guidance of Education Act 1998 and subsequent

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amendments, a maximum number of 27 students per classroom, per class level is adhered to when allocating any admissions to the school. This intake limit is set out each year in the school's annual admissions notice and was ratified by the Board of Management in October 2022. Classes in the school which have surpassed this maximum number prior to the amendment at section 6 of the school admissions policy will remain at their current allocation and shall not increase until such time that the specific class student number falls below 27 students.

In the event that the school is 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 and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school. (the eldest children will have priority in this ranking, however the applicant must be 4 years of age before April 30th in the year of admission)
2. Children resident in the catchment area of the Adamstown SDZ and/ or children of current staff members (the eldest children will have priority in this ranking, however the applicant must be 4 years of age before April 30th in the year of admission)
3. Children of families who are not resident in the catchment area (the eldest children will have priority in this ranking, however the applicant must be 4 years of age before April 30th in the year of admission)
4. Late applicants (the eldest children will have priority in this ranking, however the applicant must be 4 years of age before April 30th in the year of admission)

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:

- In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

7. 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, including naíonraí;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;

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(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to: – admission to the ASD special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned.

(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 in the case of siblings and children of staff members – see selection criteria above)

(g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school –

This is 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. This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. John the Evangelist 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.

9. 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.

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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).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from St. John the Evangelist NS, you must indicate —

- i) that you accept the offer of a school placement, in writing, and must do so within the timeframe set out in the annual admissions notice, or for applications of admission outside of the admissions window, within 5 days of receipt of the letter of offer.
- ii) acceptance and provide an agreement in writing of the school Code of Behaviour and that you shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by your student.
- iii) 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
- iv) 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.

11. 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 St. John the Evangelist NS 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, or where applicable during the school year, within 5 days of the date of admission decision and letter of offer from 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.

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12. 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).

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

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 St. John the Evangelist 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 St. John the Evangelist NS 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.

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.

14. 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.

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15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

From time to time a new family may move into the catchment area and wish to transfer their child/children to St. John the Evangelist NS. 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:

- All applications for admission after the commencement of the school year as outlined in the annual admission notice/Sections 5 and 6 above, 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.

Prior to making a determination on the enrolment of a child into any class from Senior Infants to Sixth class St. John the Evangelist NS will ask parents/guardians to fill in registration forms and will request the following:

- utility bill (electricity, gas, waste collection)
- original birth certificate

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

The board of St. John the Evangelist NS 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 or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has 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, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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.

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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.

Communication, Monitoring and Review

This policy will be communicated to staff of St. John the Evangelist NS and the school community as appropriate and will be subjected to annual review.

Signed: Rose O'Driscoll
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: James Cull
(Principal)

Date: 27/9/23

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Date of next review: Sept '24