



St. Peter's National School

Maynooth Road
Dunboyne
Co. Meath

Roll no. 20191V

School Patron: Bishop of Meath and Kildare

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 20th December, 2022. 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. Peter's National School's 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 as an appendix to this document 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. Peter's National School is a co-educational primary school with a Church of Ireland ethos under the patronage of The Right Reverend Patricia Storey the Bishop of Meath and Kildare. The school aims to foster an ethos and characteristic spirit of the Anglican Christian tradition.

As such, this seeks to nurture and encourage the formation of the intellectual, academic, sporting, social and religious abilities of each child within the framework of the community of faith.

A Church of Ireland ethos encourages intellectual diversity of thought and encourages the individual to seek to understand themselves, the world around them and the connection between the world and God. This understanding of school ethos promotes pluralism in thought and living, in the context of a Christian school community.

Drawing on its Anglican tradition, the Church of Ireland School encourages home/family involvement, highlighting the importance of the family/home in the social and emotional development of the child, and more broadly, the community of the school and church.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Peter's National School 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.

Mission Statement

As a Church of Ireland school, we stand for co-education, courage, respect, empowerment, dedication, achievement, equality, and strong ties with our parish and community.

By providing an education that nurtures and develops each child as a whole person we strive to provide children the emotional and intellectual tools to navigate life today and into the future.

St. Peter's National School aims:

- to fulfil the spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of the pupils
- to provide stimulation and appropriate opportunities to enable a child to reach his/her full potential
- to foster a happy relaxed environment that will be conducive to learning

This Church of Ireland School is a community where all pupils are equally valued and respected.

Pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging, they are treated fairly and their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged, as is their intellectual, social and academic development.

St. Peter's National School is a school where the traditions and teaching of the Church of Ireland inform the position taken in regard to moral issues which arise in the teaching of secular subjects.

3. Admission Statement

St. Peter's National School 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

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. Peter's National School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

St. Peter's National School 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 of the Church of Ireland and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Peter's National School is a school which has established 2 classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified. Our special classes 'Sonas' agus 'Spraoi' require a diagnosis of ASD and pupils must be at least 4 years of age on enrolment.

St. Peter's National School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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.

St. Peter's National School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for our special classes 'Sonas' agus 'Spraoi'

St. Peter's National School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established 2 classes 'Sonas' agus 'Spraoi' to provide an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of an ASD.

Taking into account the Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding available, the school supports the principles of;

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special education need
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs
- Traditions, languages and ways of life in society

5. (i) 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. Peter's National School is a Church of Ireland school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Church of Ireland where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Special Classes – 'Sonas' agus 'Spraoi'

The special classes 'Sonas' agus 'Spraoi' attached to St. Peter's National School provides an education exclusively for students with an ASD diagnosis 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 these classes.

Criteria for Admission to our special classes 'Sonas' agus 'Spraoi':

A child will be offered a place when all of the following requirements have been met:

1. A fully completed application form for enrolment and all available reports have been submitted to the school by the parents/guardian, within the timeframe specified in the Admissions Notice pertaining to the upcoming school year.
2. The child must have a multi-disciplinary report with a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder (DSM IV or V) and a recent recommendation to attend an ASD class attached to a mainstream school. This diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure.

(ii) Applications for Admissions

- 5.1 All applications for a place in the School shall be submitted to the School Principal on the approved Application Form. An Ethos statement and Code of Behaviour will be furnished to each Applicant with a copy of the Application Form at the appropriate time, in advance of the Admissions Application period.
- 5.2 The application must be submitted during the Admissions Application period
- 5.3 Only those Application Forms that have been completed in full, signed, dated, accompanied by relevant supporting documentation and submitted by the closing date will be considered by the Board. In order for an application to be considered, all required accompanying documentation must be provided prior to the closing date.
- 5.4 An application form must be accompanied by:
- a copy of the student's birth certificate
 - proof of address in the form of a utility bill in the applicant's name which must be dated no later than three months prior to the closing date
 - Statement confirming that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion—(see Appendix 2 - Section on Application Form)
 - Evidence to support the statement that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion, where applicable, (See Appendix 2 - section on application form)
- 5.5 It should be noted that submission of an Application Form does not confer a right to admission nor does it guarantee a place in the School.
- 5.6 Submitting inaccurate information on an Application Form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void ab initio. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn, the place being reallocated and the Applicant Student being placed last on the waiting list.
- 5.7 Submission of the Application Form early in the Admissions Application period is not a factor in the allocation of places in the School. If an application is submitted prior to the Admissions Application Period, the application will not be considered by the Board.

6. Oversubscription

a) Oversubscription to Mainstream Classes

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:

- A. **Priority Category 1:** An Applicant Student who is a member of the Church of Ireland or a Protestant reformed church or is a member of a minority religion which has the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the school and who lives within the boundary of Dunboyne and Rathmolyon Group of Parishes. In St. Peter's National School the Follow Me RE Programme is taught.
- B. **Priority Category 2:** An Applicant Student who is a member of the Church of Ireland, or a Protestant reformed church or is a member of a minority religion which has the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the school and lives within a 15km radius of the School and who complies with the terms of this Policy. In St. Peter's National School the Follow Me RE Programme is taught.

- C. **Priority Category 3:** Siblings of students previously enrolled in the school.
- D. **Priority Category 4:** All other Applicant Students who comply with the terms of this Policy.

In respect of Priority categories 1 and 2 above, the Applicant must provide the following evidence as part of the application form in order for the application to be complete, as the School must satisfy itself that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion and that it provides a programme of religious instruction or religious education which is of the same religious ethos as, or a similar religious ethos to, the religious ethos of the minority religion of the Applicant Student.

A statement from the Applicant confirming:

1. (i) that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion and (ii) that the Applicant wishes the Applicant Student to be educated in a school that provides a programme of religious instruction/education which is of the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to, the religious ethos of the minority religion of the Applicant Student.

and

2. evidence from the Applicant to support the statement that the Applicant Student is a member of the minority religion. This evidence will consist of the signature and stamp of the relevant Church leader on the application form confirming that the Applicant Student is a member of the minority religion

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:

- Where oversubscription occurs in any one of the above priority categories, priority will be given within the priority category (and only in that priority category) to Applicant Students, who have siblings currently enrolled in the School (“Sibling Applicant Students”).
- Where the number of Sibling Applicant Students in such a priority category, exceeds the available number of places, the remaining places will be allocated to Sibling Applicant Students using a lottery system (“names in a hat” method).
- Where the number of Sibling Applicant Students in such priority category does not exceed the number places available, the remaining places in this category will be allocated using a lottery system (“names in a hat” method).
- Where the Applicant Students in a category are not successful in achieving a place, their names will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which such names were drawn in the category. Applicants will be informed of the Applicant Student’s place on the waiting list as it applies in the particular priority category.

b) Oversubscription to special classes ‘Sonas’ agus ‘Spraoi’ for pupils with ASD diagnosis

In the event that the special classes ‘Sonas’ agus ‘Spraoi’ are 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 to the Special Classes and that meet the set criteria for applications as set out in Section 3 above:

1. Applicants who are currently enrolled in the school
2. Siblings of children currently enrolled in the school
3. All children who fall into Priority Category 1 – as set out in section 6a of this policy
4. All children who fall into Priority Category 2 – as set out in section 6a of this policy
5. All other applicant students

The maximum class size is six pupils. There is a total of 12 places in our special classes.

In the event of applications for enrolment exceeding, or being expected to exceed, the number of places available the Principal will allocate places using the above criteria and in the places available, children will be prioritised and enrolled in order of age, beginning with the eldest. The same applies to the other categories should places then be available.

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.
- (c) A student's academic ability, skills or aptitude.
- (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 other than siblings of a student attending or having attended the school.
- (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. Peter's National School 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.

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. Peter's National School, you must indicate:

- 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
- 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. Peter's National School 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.
- (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.
- (iv) An applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

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 the Patron or another Board of Management with a list of the students in relation to whom:

- An application for admission to the school has been received.
- An offer of admission to the school has been made.
- An offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- The date on which an application for admission was received by the school.
- The date on which an offer of admission was made by the school.
- The date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant.
- 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. Peter's National School 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. Peter's National School 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.

Applicant students whose applications are received after the closing date outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Applicant students will be offered a place if a place is available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the Admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- Applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application.
- Applicant students will be offered a place in the relevant class if a place is available.
- In the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places in the relevant class, the school will apply the selection criteria set out in Section 6 of this policy to those applications. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

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:

- Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application.
- Applicant students will be offered a place if there is a place available.
- In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

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

The BoM of St. Peter's National School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of:

- An application for admission of a student to the school, or
- 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)/guardians 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 BoM 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.

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.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Peter's National School on January 2023.

Signed: Eugene Griffin

Chairperson, Board of Management

The contents of this policy have been sent to and approved by our school's Patron, The Right Reverend Patricia Storey.