



**Admission Policy of St Brigid's Primary School,
Station Rd. Moate, Co. Westmeath
Roll Number; 15512L
School Patron; Bishop of Ardagh & Clonmacnoise Francis
Duffy**

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 September 30th 2020. 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 Brigid's Primary 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 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. Brigid's Primary School, (formerly known as Convent Primary School) Moate was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1861. Trusteeship of the school was transferred from the Mercy Sisters to the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise on 1st February 2011.

St Brigid's Primary School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise. "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 pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education for the pupils 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 Brigid's Primary 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:

This school is committed to giving each child the opportunity to reach his / her full potential. Our school is characterised by an atmosphere of respect and concern for one another, our school, our community and the environment.

The school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils: cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral, and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people and promotes a Christian Philosophy of life. We have respect for diversity of beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society and welcome children of other faiths or no faith. However with regard to the ethos of the school, Religious Instruction will only be given in the Catholic Faith and no alternative arrangements are in place for the removal of pupils from different faiths during Religious Instruction.

The school caters for the full range of classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class for girls. Boys are promoted to the Boys' School after First Class. There are 15 teachers including an administrative principal, 9 mainstream teachers, 4 Special Education Teachers and 1 Language Support Teacher..

St. Brigid's Primary School, Moate operates under the Rules for National Schools and Department Circulars and is funded by grants. Staff are resourced by the Department of Education and Science. The school is subject to The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004) equality law and all other relevant legislation. St Brigid's Primary School follows the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Science.

3. Admission Statement

St Brigid's Primary 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 Brigid's Primary School does not discriminate when it refuses to admit boys applying for admission to classes from 2nd – 6th.

St Brigid's Primary School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic 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's special classes

St Brigid's Primary School currently caters for Special Educational needs under the General Allocation Model.

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 Brigid's Primary School provides education exclusively for girls from 2nd to 6th classes and may refuse to admit as a student into these classes a person who is not of the gender provided for in these classes by the school.
- d) St Brigid's Primary School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6. Oversubscription

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. Brothers and sisters (including stepsiblings, resident at same address) of children already enrolled.
2. All children who live within a 4 kilometre radius of the school.
3. All children who apply to the school.

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), a witnessed lottery arrangement will apply.

In determining enrolment the Board of Management shall take into account Department of Education and Science regulations regarding staffing provisions, maximum class size and maximum class average and any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation such as physical space.

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Science Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the ages of 4 years of age upwards although compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years of age.

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
- b) The payment of fees or contributions (however 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 in the case of a sibling/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, 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 year concerned.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St Brigid's Primary School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- 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 Brigid's Primary School, you must indicate—

- (i) 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
- (ii) 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 Brigid’s Primary 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; or
- (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 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 Brigid’s Primary 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 Brigid’s Primary 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.

Applicants 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. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

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 and 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:

Children will be admitted to school on first school day after summer holidays provided they are four years of age. Children will be admitted once they have reached the age of four up to 30th September. Junior Infants will not be enrolled during the year unless transferring from another school. This is for education reasons as the curriculum is progressive and it is necessary for the child to complete a full year.

Pupils may transfer from other schools into all classes during the school year if newly resident in the area, subject to availability of places. Placement in classes will be at the discretion of the Principal.

Transfer of pupils from schools outside the catchment area will be discouraged. Parents will be required to make every effort to resolve issues at original school before application for enrolment can be made to this school. The Board of Management reserves the right to follow up on these issues prior to enrolment.

Temporary enrolments will be at the discretion of the Principal taking into consideration the overall enrolment and class situations.

Applications should be made in the normal manner.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St Brigid's Primary School 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

Religious Instruction will only be given in the Catholic Faith and no alternative arrangements are in place for the removal of pupils from different faiths during Religious Instruction.

The following are the school's arrangements where the parents of a student have 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 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 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.

References

Education Act 1998:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/html>

Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/14/enacted/en/html>

Equal Status Act 2000:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/8/enacted/en/html>

Education (Welfare) Act 2000:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/22/enacted/en/html>

Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2005/act/26/enacted/en/html>

