**Admission Policy**

**1. Introduction**

This Admission Policy has been compiled in accordance with the provisions 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 16th June 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. Patrick’s National School 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.

Notices will also be placed in the Parish Newsletter to notify parents that the school is accepting enrolment applications for the coming year. The enrolment process is by written application. The application form will be made available as a softcopy or hardcopy to any person who requests it.

**This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned**.

**2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

St. Patrick’s National School is a co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath

‘Catholic schools are communities which are open, welcoming and inclusive. Therefore, Catholic schools may include children who adhere to other religions or other stances for living. While mindful of their duty to educate in the distinctive beliefs, values, and practices of the Catholic community, teachers will bear witness to an attitude of respect for and appreciation of all’.

*‘The Catholic Preschool & Primary Religious Education Curriculum p15’*

‘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:

* the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
* a living relationship with God and with other people; and
* a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and 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. Patrick’s N.S. 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**

St. Patrick’s National School aims to provide an inclusive and accessible education of the highest quality, which will enable all our pupils to develop to their full potential spiritually, socially, morally, physically and academically. As well as that, we are committed to providing a learning environment which nurtures values such as respect, kindness, empathy, tolerance and compassion for ourselves and others. We aim to create a learning environment that is free from discrimination, threats, bullying and/or harassment for all our staff and pupils. In a caring and respectful way, we aim to provide a student-centred education that nurtures the strengths, talents and potential of all our pupils.

Our vision is to empower students to acquire, demonstrate, articulate and value knowledge and skills that will support them, as life-long learners, to participate in and contribute to the global world and practise the core values of the school: respect, tolerance & inclusion, and excellence. We hope to achieve this by:

* nurturing and challenging our students in a welcoming, safe and happy learning environment. We encourage children to engage in and extend their learning to become independent, responsible and creative members of the wider community.
* promoting an inclusive school community aiming to be a warm and welcoming place respectful and accommodating of diversity in race, culture, religion, gender and ability.
* promoting equality and supporting pupils with special educational needs. Learning will be accessible to each child at their own level, so that we fulfil the potential and develop the self-confidence of each child in our care. We strive for this by carefully considering the needs of each pupil and by differentiation – modifying activities or providing support that will help each child participate fully in school life.
* promoting an interest in the Irish language and culture and promote the use of Gaeilge Neamhfhoirmiúil as often as possible throughout the day.
* Being an integral part of the parish and working in partnership with parents and the Church to nurture the Catholic faith through religious education, preparation for the sacraments and through our school ethos. We value our relationship with our local community and actively promote our pupils’ and their families’ involvement in their community.
* fostering an attitude of care in our pupils towards themselves, other people, things around them and the world they live in. This is nurtured through involvement in programmes such as – Stay Safe, Walk Tall, RSE, Healthy School promotion, Digital School development, Internet Safety awareness etc.

Our ethos and mission statement are reflected in the strong work ethic, commitment, dedication and collaboration of all involved in our school community - the pupils, staff, parents, BoM, local community and Parish Priest who work together in close partnership and support and encourage each other to provide a new model of primary education that reflects Ireland in the 21st Century.

Together we nurture a love of learning in our pupils which is established through a spirit of mutual respect, in a warm, caring, supportive and stimulating environment which all concerned take great pride and enjoyment in collaboratively developing and maintaining. It is our objective that school life will have a positive impact on the lives of our pupils for as long as they are with us and that they will have positive memories of their school lives afterwards.

**3. Admission Statement**

St. Patrick’s National School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

1. the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
2. the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
3. the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
4. the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
5. the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
6. the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
7. the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
8. the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
9. 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. Patrick’s N.S. 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 Roman 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 classes**

St.Patrick’s National School embraces the philosophy of inclusiveness and endeavours to reflect that philosophy in the admission of pupils with disabilities or other special educational needs. The School is not a Special School nor does it have a special class or unit attached but the school welcomes applications from children with special educational needs. Such applications will be processed in accordance with the provisions of this Policy. Pupils with special educational needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the DES and/or NCSE.

In order to assist the School in establishing the educational and physical needs of a successful applicant, relevant to his/her ability or special needs, and to profile the support services required, the School requests that parent(s) of pupils who have been accepted for enrolment:

1. Inform the School of any special needs as early as possible; and
2. Ensure that copies of the child’s medical and/or psychological report(s) and/or professional assessment(s) are provided so that provision can be made for that applicant’s welfare and educational progress.

Where such a report is not available, and in the event that an applicant is accepted for enrolment, a request will be made that the successful applicant be assessed immediately. Following receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the School can meet the needs specified therein. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will request the DES and/or the NCSE and/or the HSE to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the medical and/or psychological report(s).

The School may seek any other relevant information in relation to a successful applicant, which it considers necessary.

The Principal may, in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (“SENO”) or the DES inspector, meet with the parent(s) of the child to discuss the child’s needs.

The above will also apply in the case of a child with special needs transferring from another school.

**5. Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

1. the school is oversubscribed (please see Section 6 below for further details)
2. 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
3. As a school with a Catholic ethos, St. Patrick’s National School does not discriminate in relation to the admission of students where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic faith and 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. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address), priority eldest;
2. Children residing in the parish of Moynalty, priority eldest;
3. All other applicants who are four years of age before the first day of the academic school year, priority eldest.

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:

If the application within categories exceeds the number of places available, older children will have precedence.

**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:

1. a student’s prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
2. the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
3. a student’s academic ability, skills or aptitude;
4. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student’s parents;
5. a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
6. a student’s connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family having previously attended the school in the past(e.g. parent/grandparent having attended the school);
7. 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. (In other words, there is no advantage if the enrolment forms are handed in to the school on the first or last day of the specified days for enrolment. However, late applications will affect enrolment if the school is oversubscribed).

**8. Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Patrick’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.

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the B.O.M. in accordance with school policy. The School will notify parents of their decision as soon as is practicable.

The BOM will have regard for the relevant DoES guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, including physical space and the health and welfare of children.

Children applying to enrol in St Patrick’s National School must have reached the age of 4 years by August 31st of the year they will commence school.

**9. Notifying applicants of decisions**

Applicants will be informed 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 Patrick’s National 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. Patrick’s National School where:

1. it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
2. 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.
3. 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
4. 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;

1. 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. Patrick’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 Patrick’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.

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. Procedure 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:**

Children wishing to enrol into classes that already exist, or children seeking to transfer to St. Patrick’s National School from other schools, are enrolled subject to this Admissions Policy and the availability of places within the school taking all relevant circumstances into account.

**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:**

**Pupils transferring**

Subject to availability of a place, pupils may be enrolled during the school year in accordance with this school’s Admissions Policy.

**Any available places will be offered in strict accordance with this school’s Admissions Policy**

In all cases, information concerning attendance and the child’s educational progress will be sought from previous school(s) attended before enrolment.

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

The board of St. Patrick’s National Schoolor 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**

Our school is of Roman Catholic ethos and, in keeping with that ethos, children of all or no other faith are welcome to apply to this school.

The following are the school’s arrangements for students, where the parent(s)/guardian(s) have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction (etc.) 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)/guardian(s) of the student, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

**18. Review/Appeals**

**Review of decisions by the board of Management**

The parents/guardians 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 parents/guardians 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.

**19. Implementation and Review**

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management and will be reviewed and amended as deemed necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

**20. Ratification & Communication**

This policy was reviewed and updated in collaboration with all staff during April 2020. This policy was subsequently circulated to BOM members for consideration.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St.Patrick’s National School on 30th June 2020. It will be available through our administration office.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fr. Joseph McEvoy

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal (Acting)