

St. Laurence O'Toole's G.N.S

Enrolment Policy

Introduction

The Board of Management of St Laurence O'Tooles GNS School hereby sets out its Enrolment and Admission Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal Teacher will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy.

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school.

General School Information

Name of School: St Laurence O'Toole's Girls' National School

Telephone No. 01-8366494

At present, the teaching staff is comprised of 9 single class Teachers, 1 Principal Teacher, 2 Learning Support Teachers, 1 Teacher Support Teacher, 1 HSCL teacher and 2 Special Needs Assistants. The full range of classes is taught in the school.

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. The school Policy has regard to the resources and funding available.

Class starts at 8.50 a.m. and finishes at 2.30 p.m. Infant Classes finish at 1.30 p.m. Finishing times for classes at Prep Year are staggered to facilitate children growing accustomed to new environment.

Rationale

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the Ethos, the mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it and
- To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school

Legal Framework

Section 9 (j) of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that “A recognized school shallSubject to this Act and in particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school”.

Section 15 (2) (d) states the Board of Management shall “publish The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents’ choice are respected”.

Section 27 (1) states that “A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school” and (2) that “the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers”.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 [Section 19 (1)] requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school’s Admission Policy. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information “make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof”

The Equal Status Act, 2000 [Sections 5 & 7 (2)] prohibits discrimination on the grounds of “gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community” regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values [Section 7 (3)].

Goals

The school shall have in place appropriate channels of communication and procedures

- To inform parents about the school, its programmes, activities, and procedures
- To enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner
- To put in place criteria under which applications shall be considered
- To ensure that these criteria are informed by our Ethos, our Mission Statement & current legislation
- To specify what information is required by the school at the time of application

Context, Resources, School Organisation & Curriculum

St. Laurence O'Toole's Girls' School is a Roman Catholic school under the Patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin

As a Roman Catholic school, the school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by a belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition for the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith. The school caters for:

1. Sisters of children in the school.
2. Catholic girls of the parish (including children of the Travelling Community resident within parish)
3. Catholic girls who live outside the parish and do not have a Catholic school in their parish.
4. All girls who live within the parish boundaries but are not Catholic applying for a placement are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the groups from 1-3 above have been allocated places.
5. All girls who apply to the school and are not Catholics and not residents within the parish boundaries are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the groups from 1-4 have been allocated places.

In order to accommodate groups 1 and 2 Boards may have to operate a cut off in age of applicants to give places to groups 1 and 2 if there is pressure for places in the school.

The range of classes taught is from Preparatory Year to Sixth Class. The school depends on grants and resources from the Department of Education and Science, and therefore cooperates with regulations laid down by the Department. The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

The school supports the principles of

- (a) Inclusiveness, this includes children with a disability or other special education needs.
- (b) Equality of access and participation in the school.
- (c) Parental choice in relation to enrolment.
- (d) Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life within society.

The school opens at 8.50am and closes at 2.30pm. Lunch takes place between 12.15 and 12.45pm.

The Enrolment Policy of St. Laurence O'Tooles' Girls' School has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. In order to assist Parents in relation to Enrolment matters, the Chairperson of the Board of Management of the Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy. Parents seeking to enrol their child are requested to return a completed Enrolment Application Form with an original Birth /Adoption

Certificate to the school by May 31 each year. Under the rules of the Department of Education and Science pupils may only be enrolled from the age of four years of age and upwards.

Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances.

Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy:

Roles of Board of Management

- To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementations and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.
- To decide on appeals by parents or students with respect to any decision(s) made by the Principal/Board..
- To prepare (and submit to the Education Welfare Board) a statement of Strategies regarding Attendance. The Statement of Strategy will have regard to guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board and will set out the measures the Board of Management proposes to adopt
 - a) For the purposes of fostering and appreciation of learning among students attending the school and
 - b) Encouraging regular attendance at the school on the part of all students

Role of the Principal

- To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, students, parents, Board and Trustees
- To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review date
- To implement the policy and to support all staff in their implementation of the policy
- To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with government policies
- To ensure, within the constraints of available resources, that alternative programmes are devised where necessary and practicable to meet the needs of students
- To appraise the policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate
- To ensure a register of all students attending the school is established and maintained
- To ensure that a record of attendance or non-attendance is maintained for each student registered at this school and, in the case of non-attendance, the reason for same
- Prior to registering a child, to provide the parents of an applicant with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and ensure that the parent confirm in

writing their acceptance of the Code of an assurance that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child

- To provide, on request, to any parent of a child registered in the school with a copy of the Code of Behaviour
- Where a child is refused admission, to advise the parents of their right of appeal to the Trustees and the Department of Education setting out Title and Address of each and advising of time limits

Role of Teaching staff

- To co-operate with the implementation of this policy
- To take the needs of all students into account in the way in which they select textbooks, plan and teach their lessons and conduct assessments
- To bring concerns about Special Needs curricular matters and information to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Special Needs Teacher
- To keep parents informed through the regular Parent / Teacher Meetings and School Reports and by meeting parents from time to time as required.
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

Role of Students

- To co-operate fully with the school in the implementations of the policy
- To offer suggestions for improving the service to students with special needs

Role of Parents

- To support the policy and to co-operate fully with the school in its implementation
- To bring to the attention of the school authorities any concern they may have in relation to the school's provision for the educational needs of their child
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

Policy Considerations

The Board of Management of St. Laurence O'Toole's Girls' National School reserves the right of admission if such admissions contravene Departmental guidelines on class size, etc.

The school will maintain a list of refused applicants for each class, their place on that list having been determined under the criteria outlined.

The Board of Management respects parental choice in relation to enrolment, provided the enrolment criteria are fulfilled.

The Board of Management of St Laurence O'Toole's National School, in its Policy of Admissions/Enrolment, respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of girls in each class, bearing in mind:

- Health & Safety Concerns regarding Staff and Children
- Available classroom space
- Multi-grade classes

- Educational needs of the children
- Presence of children with special needs
- Department of Education & Science class size directives
- Appropriate Supports and Resources are available
- Time of school year
- DEIS Criteria

Procedures – Application, Enrolment Criteria & Decision / Appeals

- Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit a student.
- Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage
- In applying the criteria for enrolment, the school will take into account limitations in the size of classes

Admission to the school is, of course, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources, and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission.

Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources-where the resources cannot be secured, the school reserves the unfettered right to refuse admission. It is the responsibility of parents / guardians of any child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form for the child's own welfare.

In this context the school authorities will have equal regard for the welfare of all the students and their right to an education in an atmosphere that is not detrimental to their physical, emotional, moral, social or intellectual development. Failure to fully complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

Application for immediate admission in the current school year

- Application forms are available from the school secretary
- Failure to fully complete forms will result in refusal to admit the applicant
- The behaviour record of a student in their previous school shall be considered
- The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall be considered

Preparatory Infant Enrolment Procedure

The registration process is initiated on receipt by the school of a completed application form and a birth/baptismal certificate. This form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians. The form will be date stamped on receipt by the school, and is attached as appendix 1 to this policy. Telephone calls or personal school visits concerning enrolment will be facilitated, but are not in themselves enrolment applications.

Date of application, child's date of birth, address and telephone contact number are recorded in the School Record of Applications, and an acknowledgement together with a copy of this policy is sent to the applicant. The acknowledgement of an

application merely confirms that it will be assessed under the criteria outlined, and does not confer any further status on that application.

Entry in the School Record of Applications means that an application will be considered in early March of the relevant enrolment year, and will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy.

Following this evaluation, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board, listing proposed enrolments for the forthcoming year. Once an enrolment list is approved by the Board, all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome, and if refused admission will be notified of their entitlement to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Please note:

Applications for admission to Preparatory Infant Class must be made at the very latest by the end of February of the year in which it is expected that the child will start school. The Board of Management understand that children may be accepted as they turn four years of age up until the Easter period of that year with assessments made at the end of that year in relation to progress to Junior Infants for all children who arrive in after Christmas.

Monitoring Procedures

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff at the same time. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment in December each year and regularly thereafter until enrolment is complete. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to him by the Board in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

Review Procedure

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every five years. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. Next review of this policy will occur at the end of the school year 2011/2012.