

Admission Policy of St Brigid's Infant School

School Address: Wellmount Avenue, Finglas West

Roll number: 20029M

School Patron: Catholic Archbishop of Dublin

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.

St Brigid's Infant School is an infant school catering for the education of young children up to the end of First Class, including pupils in the ASD class. Early in the final year in our school i.e First Class, parents will be obliged to begin the process of arranging for children for onward transfer to their next school. Parents should also contact the local SENO who may be in the position to assist parents of pupils in the ASD class to apply for an onward placement.

The policy was approved by the school patron . 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 Infant 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.

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 Infant School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. Catholic Ethos in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) the full harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the child, 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
- (d) the formation of the children in the Catholic faith,

And which school provides religious education for the children 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) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St Brigid's Infant 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.

As outlined in our Mission statement "The child is the focus of our energy. In partnership with parents, the wider community and the Department of Education & Skills our school team strives to deliver a holistic education to each child. We aim to offer a positive meaningful educational experience which allows the child to develop to his/her full learning potential in a safe, happy, stimulating and structured learning environment".

Our schools Vision is that all children and all staff realise their full potential in a safe, happy, stimulating and Christian environment.

3. Admission Statement

St Brigid's Infant 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 Infant School is a Catholic school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St Brigid's Infant School is a school which is establishing a class, 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.

St Brigid's Infant 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 Brigid's Infant 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 in the school/special class

St Brigid's Infant School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, is establishing one class to provide an education exclusively for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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 Infant School is a Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a pupil a person who is not of Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special class attached to St Brigid's Infant School provides an education exclusively for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

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:

The number of places available will be decided in line with current guidelines for class size in a DEIS Band 1 school.

Criteria for enrolment into Junior Infants in mainstream in the event of oversubscription:

1. Children from our Early Start Preschool.
2. Siblings, stepsiblings and foster siblings of children already enrolled in the school or St Brigid's Senior Girls or St Fergal's Boys School and /or children resident in the parish of Annunciation, Finglas West (the eldest child will have priority). See Appendix A for map of parish boundaries.
3. Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority)
4. Children residing outside the parish of Annunciation, Finglas West (the eldest child will have priority)

Criteria for enrolment into Early Start Preschool in the event of oversubscription:

1. Children most at risk of not reaching their potential in the education system due to the effects of social/economic disadvantage (DE Guidelines).
2. Siblings, stepsiblings and foster siblings of children already enrolled in the school and /or children residing in the parish of Annunciation (the eldest child will have priority).
3. Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority).
4. Children residing outside the parish of Annunciation, Finglas West (the eldest child will have priority).

Criteria for enrolment into the Special Class for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the event of oversubscription:

- The child must have a diagnosis of Autism/ASD with complex needs, without significant intellectual impairment made using the DSM V or ICD 10, and a recommendation that a placement in an ASD unit is appropriate.
- A recent (no more than 2 years old) psychological assessment or a report or a letter from a multi-disciplinary team should be provided. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Social Worker or a Physiotherapist.
- The overall IQ score/level of ability as measured in the educational assessment must fall within the Average or Mild General Learning Disability Range. Liaison with a psychologist may be deemed necessary.
- Children must be aged between five (from September 1st of year of enrolment) and seven, turning eight, in their last academic year (First class). **It will be deemed compulsory that the year the child turns eight (i.e. integrating with 1st class in the mainstream part of the school) will be their last year in St Brigid's Infant School. For the avoidance of doubt, the child must be no older than seven on 1 Sept of their last year in the school.**

Each application will be considered by the school Principal, Special Education Coordinator and Special Education Teachers. A recommendation will be made in relation to each application to the Board of Management (BOM) of the school. The BOM has the right to endorse or overrule any decision made by the school Principal, Special Education Co-ordinator and Special Education Teachers.

The maximum class size in each special class is six pupils. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order:

1. Children currently on roll in St Brigid's Infant School with a diagnosis of Autism and having a written recommendation (report or letter preceding a full report) from a member of a multi-disciplinary team recommending placement in an ASD class.
2. Children attending St Brigid's Senior Girls or St Fergal's School, having a professional recommendation for a placement in an ASD class.
3. Children resident in the parish of Annunciation, Finglas West and/or siblings, step-siblings (living at the same address) of children enrolled in St Brigid's or St Fergal's schools. Proof of address (eg utility bills) may be requested.
4. Children residing outside the parish of Annunciation, Finglas West.
For the avoidance of doubt, parents may consult the map showing boundaries of parish of the Annunciation in Appendix A.

1. An application form, provided by the school, should be fully completed by the parents/guardians on behalf of the child.
2. This application form should be accompanied by an original birth certificate.
3. The most recent psychological assessment report or a report or a letter from a member of a multi-disciplinary team must also be provided. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a clinical psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, social worker

and physiotherapist. Please note all current reports should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team. **The withholding of reports or relevant information may invalidate an application for enrolment at any time.**

4. The child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder without significant intellectual impairment, made using the DSM-V or ICD 10 by the psychologist or another member of the multi-disciplinary team. If the child also presents with a general learning disability, it must fall within the mild range (this diagnosis must also be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment tool).

5. There must be a recommendation in the report by a member of the multi-disciplinary team that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child.

6. The child must be aged between 5 and 7 years of age at enrolment. All children must be five years of age on or before the 1st September in the year they are due to enrol in the class.

7. The parents of the child must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

8. If a child is offered a place in the ASD class, parents must sign and return an Acceptance Form within the required time period.

9. The age and learning needs of pupils currently enrolled in the ASD class will be taken in to account when offers of enrolment are made to new applicants.

Please note:

Fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available.

Admissions Team

Each application for a place in the ASD class will be considered by the Admissions Team, comprising the principal, SET coordinator and members of the SET team. A recommendation will be made by the Admissions team in relation to each application to the Board of Management of the school. Final decisions in relation to applications for enrolment in the ASD class rest with the Board of Management.

Capacity

A maximum of six children can be accommodated in the ASD class, taught by one teacher and supported by two Special Needs Assistants.

Acceptance of a place

Following the offer of a place in the ASD class, an Acceptance form, as issued by the school, must be returned to the school within the required time.

- The parents of a child being offered a place in the ASD class will be invited to visit the school and meet with a member of the Special Education Team and the Principal of the school.
- The parents may be requested by the school to consent to a visit by the staff to a child's preschool/home setting to observe the child.
- The parents/guardians will be invited on another occasion to come with their child to the class to meet with staff and see the classroom.
- Each child in the ASD class will be assigned to an age- appropriate mainstream class to allow for integration i.e Junior Infants, Senior Infants or First Class.

Monitoring and Review

The school reserves the right to review the child's progress from time to time, during or after each year to determine whether this is indeed an appropriate school placement for the child.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

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

The child will be registered under the name which appears on the Birth Certificate. Parents are requested to provide evidence of the child's PPS number. The Board of Management will notify successful applicants by the time indicated on the Admissions Notice. As well as deciding to whom offers are to be made, the Board will also compile a list of those who have, as yet, been unsuccessful. This list will be compiled according to the criteria for enrolment. Subsequent offers of places will take place if and when vacancies arise. Offers will be made on the basis of applicants' places on the list. Parents of children who have been accepted for enrolment must inform the school, in writing, within 7 days if they wish to accept the place. Failure to do so will result in re-allocation of the place.

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 child's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
 - (I) an early intervention class, or
 - (II) an Early Start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
(other than in relation to:
admission to the special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned)
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; other than siblings of a student attending the school or St Brigid's Senior Girls or St Fergal's Boys Schools as per Enrolment Criteria .
- (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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St Brigid's Infant 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 Brigid's Infant 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 Infant 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 Infant 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 Infant 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.

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.

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 children who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

Children may transfer to St Brigid's Infant School at any time during the school year, subject to school policy, availability of space and in some cases approval by the Department of Education and Skills. A parent/guardian who wishes to enrol his/her child is required to fill out an enrolment application form and follow the procedures outlined above

The parent/guardian will be asked to provide reports /relevant information from the previous school and to give permission to this school to seek information, including relevant professional reports from the child's previous school. It is a requirement of the Education Welfare Act Section 20 5 (a) (b) that information including the child's attendance and educational progress be communicated between schools .

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of children who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

In the event of an application being received for immediate enrolment /pupil transfer the Board will endeavour to facilitate such enrolment subject to capacity constraints of the school at that time and the Department's general policy on enrolment.

The parent/guardian and child will meet with the principal.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The Board of St Brigid's Infant 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school's arrangements for children, where the parents /guardians have requested that the child 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/guardian 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 a child, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under Section 29B 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.

This Admissions policy was approved by Board of Management

Date: 16/1/2023

Chairperson: Frank Reedy