

Holy Family NS Enrolment Policy

Rationale

The Board of Management of Holy Family NS sets out its Enrolment/Admissions Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, Equal Status Act 2000 and Disability Act 2002.

General information

School name: Holy Family NS

Address: Carrickboy, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal

Telephone: 0719851689

Holy Family NS is a co-educational Catholic Primary School in the parish of Magh Erne, under the patronage of the Bishop of Clogher, Liam Mc Daid. The Board of Management and staff are committed to a holistic education for all pupils, in a respectful atmosphere in partnership with parents and the wider community.

The aim of our school is to provide for the religious, moral, intellectual, physical and social development of all pupils. Emphasis on the child and the child's needs is the central feature of our school curriculum.

The formation of good citizens, well behaved and capable of making constructive contributions to their community is our goal.

There are five class teachers, including the principal. There are two special education teachers. There is one special needs assistant. There is also a part-time secretary and a part-time cleaner/caretaker.

The number of staff may change in line with staffing requirements of the Department of Education and with enrolment numbers.

The school has a vertical structure and caters for children from junior infants-sixth class.

Classes begin at 9.20am.

Morning break is from 11.00am – 11.10am.

Lunch break is from 1.00pm- 1.30pm.

Junior and senior infants finish school at 2.00pm.

All other pupils finish school at 3.00pm.

The Board of Management will not be responsible for children on the school campuses outside of the opening and closing times.

The school follows the Department of Education and Skills curricular programme in accordance with section 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

The SPHE programme is fully implemented in the school curriculum and includes the mandatory RSE and Stay Safe programmes (Refer to Child Protection Policy and RSE Policy).

Children in second class are prepared for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

Children in sixth class are prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Within the context and parameters of the Department of Education and Skills regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act 1998, the funding and resources available, (on which school policy is based) and considering at all times the health and safety of all pupils and staff the school supports the principles of:

1. **Inclusiveness** particularly with reference to the enrolment of pupils with special needs.
2. **Equality** of access and participation in school life.
3. **Parental choice** in relation to enrolment.
4. **Respect** for diversity of values beliefs, traditions, ethnic minorities, language and culture.

Enrolment application procedure

Enrolment forms are available from the school for any parent who wishes to enrol their child in Holy Family NS. For incoming junior infants, these forms should be completed and returned to the principal before the end of March. The school will inform the wider community of the availability of enrolment forms using school newsletters, the school website, the parish newsletter and local media.

Parents of prospective new Junior Infants will be invited to a meeting with the infant class teacher and the school principal in February of each year. Prospective Junior Infants will be invited to come to the school towards the end of June to meet with their new teacher and familiarize themselves with their classroom and the school environment.

While recognizing the rights of parents to enroll their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Holy Family N.S. must also respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the Board of

Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each classroom.

Provision of key information by parents

Certain information will be required when children are being enrolled. A specific enrolment form will be provided by the Board for this purpose. Such information may include:

- Pupil's name, age and address;
- Names and addresses of pupil's parents/guardians;
- Contact telephone numbers;
- Contact telephone numbers in case of emergency;
- Details of any medical Behavioural or other conditions which the school should be aware of;
- Religion;
- Previous schools attended, if any, and reasons for transfer, if applicable; and
- Any other relevant information (including any such further information as may be prescribed under the Education Welfare Act (2000) or Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004).
- The DOES requirements for P.O.D will be included in the enrolment form

Criteria for admission

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with this policy. The Board will notify parents of their decision within 21 days of receiving such information.

As a general principle, and in so far as practicable having regard to the school's enrolment policy, children will be enrolled on application, provided that there is space available. (See note below on Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004)

The Board will have regard for relevant Department of Education and Science 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.

The Board is bound by the Department of Education and Science's Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years i.e the child should be at least 4 years of age on the date of entry to the reception class in September

In the event that applications for enrolment exceeds/is expected to exceed the number of places available, the following decision making process will apply. The Board will exercise its discretion in the application of the following criteria. The criteria may include any of the following though not necessarily in that order:

- The child is domiciled in the parish
- The child has siblings already attending the school
- Children of staff members

- First come first served
- Lack of space/overcrowding of classrooms

The Board of Management may exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances where:

1. The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education & Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an education appropriate to his/her needs.
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to school staff, to himself or to school property.

Decisions in relation to application for enrolment will be made before the end of May. Parents will be informed of the decision by letter within the school term.

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Skills Rules for National Schools which states that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of four upwards though compulsory enrolment does not apply until the child reaches the age of six. Junior Infants will be enrolled in the month of September only. No Junior Infant will be enrolled after September 30th unless they have previously attended another school.

Children transferring from other schools

Pupils may transfer from other schools to Holy Family NS at the beginning of the school year or during the school year. While recognising the rights of parents to enrol their children in the school of their choice, the Board of Management is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular the children already enrolled in the school.

The Board of management will always be guided by Department of Education guidelines and the principles of natural justice and fairness and will base their decisions on the following:

- Space availability in the age appropriate class setting.
- Multi-grade class situations.
- Pupils' Educational/Psychological/Behavioural issues which may need to be met and the school's capability to meet these needs.
- That the Board of Management is satisfied with the reason for transfer.
- Parents/Guardians must be willing to furnish the principal with school reports, psychological/educational assessments (if any) and attendance reports from their previous school. The Principal must also be made aware of any behavioural issues or any special needs that the child may have.
- That the Board of Management considers the transfer to be in the best interest of the child and our school community.
- In some cases, the approval of the Department of Education and Skills will be sought.

Enrolment of children with Special Educational Needs in mainstream classes.

Children with special needs may be enrolled in mainstream classes depending on individual needs.

The enrolment process may take up to eight school weeks to complete.

Prior to enrolment being sanctioned by the Board of Management the following must be adhered to:

- The school authority will request an up to date psychological/educational assessment report.
- The school authority will seek a written recommendation from the appropriate medical personnel stating that mainstream is the proper placement for the child.
- The school authority may seek a meeting with parents/guardians of the child and psychologist/counsellors if further clarification is needed on the child's needs and the suitability and capabilities of the school community to meet these needs.
- Following a satisfactory outcome to this the board will seek to put in place the resources necessary to meet the needs of the child.
- Where this is not possible the Board of Management may recommend to the parents/guardians that the child's needs can be better met in another setting – special needs unit/special school.
- It is the schools' policy to monitor progress/regress and this also applies to children with special needs. If the child's needs are not being met in the mainstream class due to lack of specialised teaching resources, specialised programmes/facilities etc. or if his/her presence infringes on the education/learning of other children in the class or if the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to himself/herself or other pupils/staff or school property then the Board of Management will inform parents that it is not possible for the child to remain in this class setting.
- The Board of Management may also reduce the length of the school day (as part of a behaviour plan) for children who exhibit extremely challenging behaviour and in doing so are infringing on the rights of other children.
- The Board of Management's final decision on the enrolment of children or continued enrolment of children with special needs in mainstream classes will be based on the pupil's needs and the ability of the school community to meet these needs while continuing to acknowledge the rights, safety and education of all children in the class/school.

- All children enrolled in Holy Family NS are obliged to support the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline Procedures. On enrolment parents are asked to declare by signature that they have read and understood the school's Code of Discipline. It is the duty of parents/guardians to ensure that the children co-operate with the school's policies and rules.

Appeals

In very exceptional circumstance the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment. In such instance the parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Board of Management. The appeal to the Department of Education and Skills must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision was notified to parents/guardians. (Sections 29 of Education Act 1998).

Department of Education and Skills
Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit
Friar's Hill Road
Mullingar
Co. Westmeath

Review and ratification

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually.

Ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed: _____

Mark Sheerin

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____