St. John of God N.S
Kilmore Road, Artane, Dublin 5.
Roll No. 19920A
School Patron: Archbishop of Dublin

Admissions Policy

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 first approved by the school patron on 29th July 2020 and again on 20th September 2022 following changes made to the policy after the opening of a SEN class. It was subsequently approved following further legislative changes on 31st January 2023. It was updated and approved again on 24th September 2024 following approval from the Department of Education to transition from a single sex girls school to a co-educational school. It is published on the school's website www.stjohnofgodartane.com and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St. John of God N.S. admissions process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website www.stjohnofgodartane.com at least one week before the commencement of the admissions 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

Welcome to St. John of God N.S. The school was founded in 1968 by the Sisters of St. John of God and is a Catholic Primary School for boys and girls under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Dermot Farrell and the Trusteeship of the St. John of God Sisters. "Catholic Ethos" in the context of 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;
- A living relationship with God and with other people;
- 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 S15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. John of God 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.

St. John of God N.S. is a vertical primary school catering for classes ranging from Junior Infants-Sixth class and includes a Special Class for Autism. We take a holistic approach to education and aim to cater for the development of each child intellectually, physically, creatively, emotionally, morally and spiritually. The wellbeing of our pupils and maintaining a nurturing, caring and happy learning environment where children feel safe and secure are of paramount importance to us.

3. Admission Statement

St. John of God N.S. 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. John of God N.S. 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. John of God N.S. 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.

St. John of God N.S. is co-educational. Our path to co-educational status, informed by Department of Education policy, is phased, and will begin with Junior Infants in 2025. The school does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to other mainstream classes in this school.

St. John of God N.S. is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category 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.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

St. John of God N.S. is resourced with 3 SEN teaching staff and 4.66 SNAs to support the mainstream class teaching of pupils with additional learning needs. Pupils with additional needs are accommodated in an inclusive setting under the guidelines of the NCSE/NEPS/DES "Continuum of Support Framework."

From September 2022 there is provision for one Special Class in St. John of God N.S. exclusively for children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder). This class is resourced with 1 teacher and 2 SNAs and has a maximum enrolment of 6 pupils. Applications for the Special Class will only be considered on the basis of a diagnostic or Psychological Report which indicates a diagnosis of Autism meeting DSM/IV/V or ICD-10 diagnostic criteria. This class is for all pupils who meet these criteria irrespective of cognitive ability.

5. Admission of Students

(a) to Mainstream Classes

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

(b) to the Special Class for Autism

St. John of God N.S. is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special class attached to St. John of God N.S. provides an education exclusively for students with ASD meeting DSM/IV/V or ICD-10 diagnostic criteria 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.

(c) Enrolment Criteria for Admission to the Special Class for Autism

a) A fully completed application form for enrolment must be submitted to the school in hard copy by the parents/guardians within the timeframe outlined in our Annual Admissions Notice.
b) An eligibility letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.
c) The child must have a full, Psychological Assessment, which must specify a diagnosis of Autism (DSM IV, DSM V or ICD 10) and must include the specific recommendation for the placement of the child in a Special Class.
d) If a child presents with a learning disability, the diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical or educational psychologist.
e) 1st priority for admission into the new Special Class will be given to children currently attending mainstream classes in St. John of God N.S. with a diagnosis of Autism, accompanied by a recommendation by a relevant professional for placement in the Special Class and an eligibility letter from the NCSE.
f) 2nd priority is given to siblings (including stepsiblings who are resident at the same address) of children already enrolled in St. John of God N.S., who fulfil criteria (a-d) above.
g) 3rd priority is given to children living in the parish of Ardlea and who fulfil criteria (a-d) above.
h) 4th priority is given to children outside of the parish catchment area whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an ordinance survey map) and who fulfil criteria (a-d).
i) All placements in the Special Class will be subject to review at the request of the parents/guardians and/or the school. Such a review will include input from parents/guardians, school staff and relevant outside agencies working with the child.

6. Oversubscription in Mainstream Classes

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:

Selection Criteria:

1. Siblings, including foster or step-siblings, of children already enrolled in St. John of God N.S. and children resident in the parish (the eldest child will have priority)*
2. Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority)
3. Children who live outside the parish (the eldest child will have priority)

* Proof of address will have to be provided to prove residency status in the parish

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.

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, including naíonraí,

(b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever 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 their 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 their family attending or having previously attended the school other than (1) siblings of a student attending St. John of God N.S.

(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. John of God N.S. 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. John of God N.S., 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 are 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. John of God N.S. 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.

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. John of God N.S. 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. John of God N.S. 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 students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

All applications for admission received for any class from Senior Infants to Sixth Class, inclusive, 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.

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:

All applications for admission received after the commencement of the school year, 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.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St. John of God N.S. 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

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

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents 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:

Bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made so that the school is as inclusive as possible. A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s)/guardians, 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.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on: Wednesday 29th April 2020

This policy was further reviewed to include Enrolment Criteria for Admission to the newly established Special Class for ASD on 14th September 2022 and again on 24th of September 2024 following the approval from the Department of Education to transition to a co-educational school.

Signed: Brendan Prunty
Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: Aoife McNicholas
Principal

Date: 24th September 2024