**Saint Colman’s National School**

Enrolment Policy

**Introduction**

The Board of Management of St.Colman’s National 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, Ms. Fiona Murray or the Principal Teacher, Ms. Kay Joyce 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. Colman’s National School, Mucklagh, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.**

**Telephone No.(057) 93 41244**

His Lordship Bishop Michael Smyth is the Patron of the school.

At present, the teaching staff is comprised of 11 mainstream teachers, 6 Special Education teachers one of whom is shared with Gaelscoil Eiscir Riada, 2 class teachers in the Autistic Unit-LannEala and the Principal. Special Needs Assistants-8 full time posts, two 0.83 posts and one 0.5 posts. The full range of classes **is** taught in the school and classes are of mixed gender. There are 12 pupils in LannEala

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 9.20 a.m. and finishes at 3.00 p.m. Infant Classes finish at 2.00 p.m.

**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.
* 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 shall ….Subject 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 that 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, assess 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, it’s 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**

The school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society. The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parent’s choice, 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 any applicant or student. It will make every effort to secure those resources – where the resources cannot be secured the school may refuse admission. The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil – teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

**Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy:**

**Roles of Board of Management**

* To ensure consultation with the relevant Education Partners in any review of this policy
* To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed at periodic intervals
* 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 Services) a statement of Strategies regarding Student 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
  1. For the purposes of fostering and appreciation of learning among students attending the school and
  2. 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 other teaching staff in their implementation of the policy
* To be accountable to the Board of Management for the effective implementation of this policy
* To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with government policies
* To ensure, within the constraints of available staffing, financial and accommodation 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 school Code of Behaviour
* Where a child is refused admission to the school, 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, Relevant Teachers
* 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 in as far as possible with the school authority 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(s) 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 implantation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

**Policy Considerations**

The Board of Management of St. Colman’s National School, Mucklagh reserves the right of admission to any student if such an admission contravenes Department of Education and Science guidelines on class size, etc.

No child will be refused admission to St. Colman’s National School on the basis of ethnicity, special education needs, disability, traveler status, refugee status, political or religious beliefs, family or social circumstances, provided the necessary supports are in place in the school. Reference to the Catholic Parish of Rahan in our criteria for enrolment is on the basis of significant financial contributions and commitments from this Parish to the school.

The school will maintain a list of refused applicants for each class, with their place on that list having been determined under the criteria outlined. **This list will cease toexist on December 31st of the year of enrolment.**

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

The Board of Management of St. Colman’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 children 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 educational needs**

**>Department of Education & Science class size directives**

**> Appropriate Supports and Resources are available**

**>Time of school year**

**Procedures – Application, Enrolment Criteria & Decision / Appeals**

* Failure to fully complete an application form may result in refusal to admit a student to the school
* Further relevant information may be sought by the school management at a later stage

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 all 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 for **Enrolment Forms** are available from the school secretary or the principal or may be downloaded from the school website.
* Failure to fully complete an application form may 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

**Junior Infant Enrolment Procedure**

• The registration process is initiated on receipt by the school of a completed application **for enrolment form.Application for enrolment forms are accepted only in year prior to the child starting school**. This form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians. The form will be stamped and dated on receipt by the school. 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. The acceptance 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 February of the relevant enrolment year, and will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy.

The Board of Management reserve the right to confirm that all details supplied are correct and may be subject to verification.

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

**The Board of Management determines the maximum number of children in the**

**school based on the Department of Education recommended enrolment as per**

**Circular 0010/2008**

**Please note:**

Applications for admission to Junior Infant Class must be made at the very latest by **the 15th April** of the year in which it is expected that the child will start school, unless there are mitigating circumstances. The Board of Management strongly recommends that applicant children are at least four years of age on or before April 30thof the school commencement year.

**Junior Infant Enrolment Criteria**

If the number of children **applying** exceeds the number of places available, the following prioritising criteria are used:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Priority** | **Criterion** |
| 1 | Priority is given to brothers and sisters of children in the mainstream school. If the class is oversubscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.  ( \* Siblings of children enrolled in Lann Eala) |
| 2 | Children of current staff (teaching and ancillary). |
| 3 | Catholic families whose primary residence is within the Mucklagh boundaries of Rahan Parish  # If the class is oversubscribed, see below  The Board of Management reserves the right to verify primary residence. An address of convenience is not acceptable. |
| 4 | Brothers and sisters of children who have attended the school in the past  # If the class is oversubscribed, see below |
| 5 | Children who are being cared for by a child practitioner/provider within the Mucklagh boundaries of Rahan Parish  # If the class is oversubscribed, see below  . |
| 6 | Children of parents who are past pupils of the school and are now living outside the Mucklagh boundries of the Rahan Parish  # If the class is oversubscribed, see below |
| 7 | If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List.  # If the class is oversubscribed, see below |

#If the Junior Infant Class is oversubscribed, then remaining places will be allocated on the basis of age of the child being enrolled, in the interests of fairness and equality for all applicants

\*Siblings of children enrolled in Lann Eala

There is a separate enrolment policy for the children who attend Lann Eala. Should the siblings of pupils in Lann Eala, living outside the catchment area, apply for a place in Mainstream, then the enrolment criteria for St Colman’s Mainstream will be followed commencing at Criterion 5.

**Criteria for Enrolment from SI to 6m Classes – as above**

St. Colman’s National School will not consider applications on behalf of a student who has been excluded – expelled from another school until the parents/guardians of that child have fully exhausted the Section 29 Appeals mechanism against the former school.

All children enrolled are expected to comply with and support the school's Code of Behaviour, as well as the school's designated policies on Curriculum, Organisation and Management.

**Exceptional Circumstances**

**The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to a pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:**

1. **The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science, 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 health and safety risk, to the other pupils, to school staff or to school property.**

**Evaluation**

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular emphasis placed upon

* Effective management placed on the application process
* Clarity and transparency relating to the student enrolment / admissions process
* Ensuring applicants are informed in good time regarding the status of their application, particularly in the case of refusal to enrol
* Positive feedback to Parents/Guardians

**Monitoring Procedures**

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate 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 completed for the forthcoming school academic year. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to him/her by the Board of Management 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 Board of Management following consultation with the school Education Partners every two years. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of this school policy may submit in writing a request for a review of the policy, at any time, and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible by the Board of Management. Next review of this policy will occur before or during the school year 2015-2016 or in line with changing legislation or best practice.

This policy has been reviewed in conjunction with our enrolment policy for Lann Eala -2015

Signed : Kay Joyce January 27th 2015

(Ms. Kay Joyce, Principal)

Signed : Fiona Murray January 27th 2015

(Ms. Fiona Murray, Chairperson, Board of Management)