

The following Policy Statement of St. Finian's N.S. Dillonstown has been agreed having followed the guidelines agreed between C.P.S.M.A., Church of Ireland Board of Education, and I.N.T.O. to assist schools in drafting an Enrolment Policy as provided for by the Education Act 1998, and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

ENROLMENT/ADMISSION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In introducing its enrolment/admissions policy, the BOM of St. Finian's National School, Dillonstown, Dunleer, Co. Louth is doing so with reference to the Rules for National Schools and in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. By doing so the Board trusts that parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters and furthermore, the Chairperson of the BOM, Fr. Thomas Daly, and the Principal teacher, Mr. Pádraig Mc Eneany, will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The name of the school is St. Finian's National School and is located at Dillonstown, Dunleer, Co. Louth. Phone: 041 6851725.
- The denominational character of the school is Roman Catholic and the patron is the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh. The ethos of our school is Catholic and in this atmosphere the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical growth of our pupils is nurtured.
- The current staff of five teachers in the school includes that Principal teacher, two classroom teachers, one full-time Special Education Teacher and a part-time Special Education Teacher.
- The school is co-educational and children are taught from Junior Infants up to sixth class.
- The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science, and it operates under the Rules for National School, the Education Act 1998, and other relevant legislation, and within the regulations laid down from time to time by the Department in the form of Circulars.
- The Board, at all times, must have due regard to the resources and funding available from the Department of Education and Science.
- 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.
- Within the context and parameters of Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of;
 - (a) inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational 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, language and ways of life in society.
- School starts each day at 9.10am and finishes for Junior and Senior Infants at 1.50pm. All other classes finish at 2.50pm.
- The school has a Code of Discipline which was drawn up by staff and the BOM in consultation with parents, and is reviewed regularly.
- The enrolment of a child in the school is an acceptance by the child and his/her parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the school's Code of Discipline.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures apply for the enrolment of pupils in St.Finian's N.S:

Parents/Guardians who wish to enroll their children must return a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the office) with a copy of Birth/Adoption Certificate to the school.

The application form will request such information about each child as is necessary e.g. child's name, address, date of birth, parent's/guardian's names, PPS No. etc and any other information which may be required under the Education Welfare Act 2000.

The filling out of an application form is not an acceptance by the Board of an enrolment of a child. This final date will be communicated to the school community through appropriate channels such as circular letters from the Board, school newsletter and by announcement at weekend Masses in local churches. The BOM of our school, in accordance with school policy, makes decisions in relation to applications for enrolment. As a general principle, and in so far as in practicable, having regard to the school's ethos and rules set down by The Education Act 1998 and Education Welfare Act 2000, the Board will automatically enrol all children for whom the application form has been returned by the said closing date, provided there is space available.

The Board is bound by the Department of Education and Science Rules for National Schools, which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of four years and upwards.

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the BOM of St. Finian's N.S. has a responsibility to 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 interest of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the BOM reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom, bearing in mind:

- Size of/available space in classroom
- Educational needs of children of a particular age
- Multi-grade classes
- Presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs
- Department's maximum class average directives.

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed or are expected to exceed the number of places available, the Board shall exercise its discretion in the application of the following criteria:

1. Brothers and sisters (including step-siblings resident at same address) of children already attending the school - priority to oldest.
2. Catholic children living within the parish of Togher - priority to oldest.
3. Non-Catholic children living within the parish of Togher - priority to oldest.
4. Children of current school staff - priority to oldest.
5. In the event of being unable to enrol a child/children from the above categories in a given class at the beginning of the year, every effort will be made to accommodate such children in the following school year.

ADMISSION:

Junior Infants will preferably be admitted to the school on the first day in September.

PUPILS TRANSFERRING:

The BOM should specify that pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, available space and in some cases the approval of the Department of Education and Science.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 contains some specific new provisions in relation to the transfer of pupils including the requirement that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress should be communicated between schools.

ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

The BOM of St. Finian's N.S. supports the principle of inclusiveness and children with disabilities or other special educational needs will be enrolled in the school.

When a parent/guardian of a child with a disability or special needs applies for enrolment a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report will be requested or where such a report is not available, the parent/guardian will be asked to have the child assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report the Board will assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report. If the Board deems that further resources are required it will, prior to admission, request the Department of Education and Science to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological or medical report. These resources may include access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other.

The school will meet with parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held, which may include parents, Principal, class teacher, Learning Support teacher, Resource teacher for special needs or psychologist as appropriate.

PROMOTION OF PUPILS:

In general, all pupils will be promoted to a higher standard at the end of each school year as set out in Circular 10/'67. There may be exceptional cases from time to time where the Principal teacher, in consultation with the class teacher and Learning Support teacher may feel that a pupil would benefit educationally by being retained in the same class for a second year. When this is the case, the Principal and class teacher will advise the parent in good time that they are of the opinion that the child would benefit educationally by being retained in the same class for a second year. Only after consultation, discussion and agreement with the parents will any child be retained in the same class for a second year. In keeping with recommendations set out in Circular 10/'67 and 11/'01, we will not retain any child in the same class for two years after they have completed fourth standard.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on June 13th 2011

Signed (Fr. Tomás Ó Dálaigh) _____

This Policy will be reviewed in June 2012 and every three years thereafter.