



Scoil Náisiúnta Tobar Mhairéide

Admission Policy of St. Margaret's National School

School Address: Sandyhill,
St. Margaret's,
Co. Dublin
K67PE80

Roll number: 18038B

Catholic Primary School under the Patronage of the 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 Parent /Guardians of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 13th July 2020. 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. Margaret's N.S. 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. Margaret's National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop 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 and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, 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; and
- (d) 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 S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Margaret's National 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.

The school is a Roman Catholic school, teaching all standards from junior infants to sixth class. The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Science and it operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the department.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education & Skills, 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:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need;
- Equality of access and participation in the school;
- Parent/guardian choice in relation to enrolment;
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

Admission Statement

St. Margaret's 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.

All denominational schools

St. Margaret's National School is a 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.

3. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5 below for further details)
- b) a parent/guardian 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.

Section 4: Enrolment of Children with Special Needs:

- Children with special educational needs are welcome to enroll in St. Margaret's N.S. The child will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to the Board of Management.
- Parents are advised to notify the school if they feel that additional supports may be required to accommodate their child in school.
- The Principal, in consultation with Parents/Guardians, the Department of Education and Skills and the Board of Management, will seek to put in place the resources necessary to meet the special needs of the child. The school may require Parents/Guardians to present copies of relevant medical or psychological reports which will assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child 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. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it should, prior to enrolment, request the Department of Education & Science to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child outlined in the psychological or medical report. These resources may include for example, 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.

4. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

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:

While recognizing the right of Parent/guardians/Guardians to enroll their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of St Margaret's National School takes cognisance of the rights of the existing school community, and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements in deciding questions of enrolment, guided by the principles of natural justice and/as acting in the best interest of all children. The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class bearing in mind, in particular:

- a) The size of available space in classrooms – currently the Board of Management has decided that no more than **28** children may be enrolled in a classroom containing multi-grade classes.
- b) The educational needs of children of a particular age, priority to the oldest.
- c) The existence of multi-grade classes
- d) Department of Education & Skills maximum class average directives.
- e) The parameters of the schools Health & Safety Policy.

In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class/ standard exceeding the number of places available the following criteria, in the order set out, will be used to prioritise children for enrolment:

1. Priority will go to children living in the environs and townlands of St. Margaret's/Sandyhill. Townlands include: Ballyhack, Ballystrahan, Barbarstown, Bishopswood, Broghan, Charlestown, Chapelmidway, Cherryhound, Cloghran, Cold Winters, Dubber, Dunbro, Dunsoughly, Harristown, Killeek, Kilmacree, Kilreask, Killsallaghan, Kingstown, Kilshane, Lanesborough, Laurestow, Meakstown, Millhead, Newpark, Newtown, Pass-if-you-can, Portmellick, Sandyhill, Shallon, Skephubble, Surgalstown, Ward Upper.

Consideration must be given to the fact that there are two other Parish Primary Schools in St. Margaret's.

2. Priority of place must go to the brothers and sisters of children in the school and children of staff in the school.
3. Children of past pupils.

4. All children who live within the parish boundaries catchment area applying for a placement are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the first three groups have been allocated places.
5. All children who apply to the school that are not residents within the parish boundaries catchment area, are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the first groups have been allocated places.

Having regard for Department of Education & Skills directives on maximum class averages and on the minimum age for school enrolment the Board of Management will not consider enrolling a child unless they have reached their **4th birthday by 1st April** in the year of enrolment. This stipulation may be reviewed in order to keep the class size within the stated guidelines of this policy.

Other pupils may be enrolled during the school year (if newly resident in the area of the school) subject to the criteria already outlined.

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.

5. 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:

Points (a) to (g) must be included here by all schools. There are limited exceptions to some of these (highlighted in red below) and schools must retain the exceptions that apply to them and delete those that do not:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naónraí.
- (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 Parent/guardians/Guardians;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her Parent/guardians/Guardians, 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, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) Parent/Guardians or grandparent/guardians of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) Parent/Guardians and GrandParent/Guardians having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

- (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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

6. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Margaret's N.S. 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 [12](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 13](#) 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.

7. 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 16](#) below for further details).

8. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

Acceptance of an offer of admission must be received in writing.

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Margaret's 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 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.

9. 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. Margaret's 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/guardian 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 8 above.

10. 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.

11. 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. Margaret’s 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. Margaret’s 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.

12. 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.

13. 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:

Other pupils may be enrolled during the school year (if newly resident in the area of the school) subject to the criteria already outlined.

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:

Other pupils may be enrolled during the school year (if newly resident in the area of the school) subject to the criteria already outlined.

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

The board of St. Margaret's 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.

15. 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 Parent/Guardians or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has 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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent/guardian(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

16. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent/guardian of the student, 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 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/guardian 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.

Signed: _____

Mary Flood, Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____

Gráinne Noone, Acting Principal