



Rathbeggan N.S.
Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath

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Registered Charity Number: 20131616

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, there has been collaboration among the school community.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 1st December 2022 and is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request.

The relevant dates and timelines for Rathbeggan N.S.'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 pre-enrolment form is available on the school's website. The application form for admission will then be sent to parents who have completed the pre-enrolment form and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic Spirit of Rathbeggan N.S.

Rathbeggan National School is a Catholic primary school. It operates under the auspices of the Department of Education and Skills and under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Meath. "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:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the child, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- the formation of the Students in the Catholic faith

and which school provides religious education for the Students 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 Rathbeggan 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.

3. Admission Statement

Rathbeggan N.S. will not discriminate in its admission of a child to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the child or the applicant in respect of the child concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the child or the applicant in respect of the child 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.

Rathbeggan N.S. 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 a Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Rathbeggan N.S will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required when required to do so by the Council.

Rathbeggan N.S. will comply with any direction served on the Board or Patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998.

4. Categories of SEN Catered for in the School/Special Class

This section is not applicable to Rathbeggan N.S. as it is not a special school and does not have special classes.

5. Admission of Students

In Rathbeggan N.S. an application will only be considered for a child who has reached their 4th birthday on or before the 30th June of the year of Admission.

The school shall admit each child seeking admission except where:

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details)
- b) a parent of a child, 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 child
- c) Rathbeggan 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.

6. Oversubscription

Students will be admitted provided that there is space available at the relevant class level. In order to maintain the current optimum pupil teacher ratio, set out in the Department of Education staffing schedule, and to ensure an appropriate education for the Students currently enrolled, the Board of Management has determined that each classroom will be deemed full if there are 30 or more Students currently enrolled and no further applicants will be admitted to that classroom.

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.

1. Brothers and sisters of Students who are currently enrolled in the school. This includes step siblings.
2. Applicants resident within the boundary of Ratoath Parish (see map in the School Office)
3. All other applicants.

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:

- Where the number of applicants in any of the above categories exceeds the remaining available school places, the applicants who fall into that category will be prioritised beginning with the eldest, in descending order of age by date of birth until all the remaining places have been filled.
- If two applicants from different families are tied for the last place and have the same date of birth, the time of birth as per the child's birth certificate will determine the oldest child and therefore that child will be offered the last remaining place in the class.
- The only exception to that will be in the event of multiple-births, where one sibling is to be offered a place as the 30th child in the class, the other sibling(s) will be offered a place also.

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 child on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- A. a child's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service
- B. the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school
- C. a child's academic ability, skills or aptitude
- D. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a child's parents
- E. a requirement that a child, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission
- F. 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 Rathbeggan 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

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.

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Rathbeggan 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.

In accepting a place in Rathbeggan N.S. you are agreeing to the curricular, organisational and management policies of the school. These policies may be amended periodically.

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 Rathbeggan N.S. where— i. it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- 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.
- the parent of a child, 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 child; or
- 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.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student’s personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

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 Rathbeggan 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 Rathbeggan N.S. is in the order of priority assigned to the

children's 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 Junior Infants for September are as follows:

1. Contact the school and request an Application for Admission form.
2. Complete the form and return to the school with supporting documentation i.e. Birth Certificate and a utility bill (dated within 3 months)
3. If upon receipt of the completed application there is space in the class in which the child should be placed the child will be offered a place in writing, within 21 days.
4. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should complete the Acceptance Form within 10 days after issue of the offer.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of Students after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

1. Contact the school for an Admission form.
2. Complete the form and return to the school with supporting documentation i.e. Birth Certificate and a utility bill (dated within 3 months).
3. If upon receipt of the completed application there is space in the class in which the child should be placed the child will be offered a place in writing, within 21 days.
4. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should complete the Acceptance Form within 10 days after issue of the offer.

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

The board of Rathbeggan 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 child to the school, or
- b. the admission or continued Admission of a child in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding Students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents 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(s) or the student, as the case may be, 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 child 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.

16. Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the child, or in the case of a child who has reached the age of 18 years, 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 reviewed at a Board of Management meeting in November 2023 and will be reviewed periodically.