

ST. BRIGID'S N.S. ADMISSIONS POLICY 2023-2024

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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 approved by the school patron on 22nd December, 2022. 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. Brigid'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.

Applicants must read this policy in conjunction with the [Annual Admission Notice](#) for the school year concerned.

The [Expression of Interest Form](#) for the new intake of junior infants 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

St. Brigid's National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Archbishop Dermot Farrell.

“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 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. Brigid'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.

Our Mission Statement

The school is a co-educational Catholic primary school which strives to provide a purposeful, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, moral, and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. While St. Brigid's N.S. is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for parents/guardians and pupils of all other religions or of none.

St. Brigid's N.S. strives to

- work in partnership with the Board of Management, staff, parents/guardians, and school community to develop moral and Christian values
- meet the needs of all its students and facilitate their personal and academic development
- help students to appreciate, explore and express their individuality as well as that of others
- support all students to grow and cultivate their talents and interests while helping them to mature as balanced, hard-working members of society
- promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes
- encourage parents'/guardians' involvement through home/school contacts and participation in St. Brigid's N.S. Parent Teacher Association
- enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community
- imbue respect for people and property in all pupils and encourage in them a sense of personal and collective responsibility
- promote equity and equality in the school
- The school enrolment policy supports inclusiveness regarding the enrolment of children with special needs, whether physical, physiological, emotional, behavioural, emotional, social, medical or other.

● 3. ADMISSION STATEMENT

St. Brigid's N.S. will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds:

- the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned
- the religious ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

- the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the Traveller Community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- 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. Brigid’s N.S. is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes specific religious values, i.e., Catholic values and beliefs, 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.

St. Brigid’s N.S. is a school which has established two autism classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with autism and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

St. Brigid’s N.S. will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) 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. Brigid’s 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.

● 4. CATEGORIES OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CATERED FOR

The Board of Management of St. Brigid's N.S. provides an inclusive education for students as determined by the Education for Persons with the Special Educational Needs Act of 2004.

“A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature and degree of those needs would be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or (b) the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.”

In September 2022, The Board of Management of St. Brigid's N.S., with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, established two Autism Classes to provide an education in a mainstream setting for children with Autism who fulfil the enrolment criteria. The decision was taken primarily to cater to children residing in the parish of Our Lady Mother of the Church, Castleknock.

In accordance with the regulations set by the Department of Education and Skills, twelve places are available for children with Autism who fit the criteria for placement in an Autism Class.

● 5. ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

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 or guardian of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm through Aladdin that the [Code of Behaviour](#) of the school is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student
- (c) St. Brigid's N.S. is a Catholic school. We may refuse to admit as a student a person not of the Catholic religion, where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the Catholic ethos of the school.

- (d) The special classes attached to St. Brigid's N.S. provides an education exclusively for students with Autism and the school may refuse admission to these classes, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in these classes.

6. OVERSUBSCRIPTION

Applications must be received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice. If the number of applicants to mainstream classes exceeds the number of places available, the following selection criteria will apply in the priority order below (starting with Priority Category 1).

In the case of oversubscription to the Autism classes, please refer to Page 10.

A) ADMISSION TO JUNIOR INFANTS

- **Priority Category 1:** Children who reside in the parish of Our Lady Mother of the Church, Castleknock and/or Children who are siblings or step-siblings of children already or previously enrolled in St. Brigid's N.S. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.
- **Priority Category 2:** Children of current staff members. The eldest child will have priority.
- **Priority Category 3:** Children residing **outside** the parish. The eldest child will also have priority.

Tied Places

If two or more children with the same date of birth are tied for a place, a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

Notes:

- Completing an Expression of Interest Form does not guarantee an offer of a place in St. Brigid's N.S.
- The official enrolment only takes place when the child is placed on the school roll on the first day of the school year, providing that the appropriate enrolment criteria have been satisfied and verified.

- ‘Siblings’ refers to children who share a common parent, foster parent or guardian.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to seek supporting documents as proof that the child's primary residence is within the parish of Our Lady Mother of the Church, Castleknock.
- Parents or guardians purchasing a house in the parish before or during the enrolment period must furnish a letter from **their solicitor** confirming the address and purchase of the property.

B) ADMISSIONS TO AUTISM CLASSES

St. Brigid’s N.S. believes that all children should attend their local school so they can become active members of the community in which they live. This is also desirable from a transport and sustainability perspective.

The school will be guided by the advice and recommendations of the NCSE when enrolling children in the Autism classes and will be assisted by the appropriate services:

- National Educational Psychological Service – N.E.P.S
- Special Educational Needs Organiser (S.E.N.O.)
- Health Service Executive (H.S.E.)
- No pupil shall be younger than 4 years of age on March 1st of the year of their proposed enrolment or older than 13 years of age during their final year in primary school.
- Registration alone does not guarantee a place in the school. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with the following criteria.
 - A confirmed diagnosis of Autism from a multi-disciplinary team, psychiatrist, or psychologist (clinical) in accordance with DSM-V, DSM-VI or ICD-10 criteria
 - A recommendation by the multi-disciplinary team for a placement in a Special Class for Autism in a mainstream school which meets the Department of Education and Skills criteria for such.
 - The most up-to-date reports regarding the child’s special educational needs to help the school determine the correct class placement for the child.
 - Our vision is that each child in the Autism Classes will be enabled with the supports available in St. Brigid’s N.S. to at least partially integrate into the mainstream classes according to their ability and capacity.

- The maximum class size in each special class is six (6) pupils.
- Pupils will be allocated to each class based on their individual needs and in accordance with the needs of the other pupils in each class.
- False or misleading declarations and/or withholding relevant information will invalidate an enrolment application and necessitate a new application by the parent/guardian.
- Pupils with the necessary diagnosis and recommendations as outlined above, may transfer to the Autism Classes if a place becomes available during the school year.

Procedure for Admission of Students to the Autism Classes:

- Parents or guardians interested in applying should phone the school (01-8214040) or email info@saintbrigids.ie to register their contact details.
- An Expression of Interest Form will then be sent before enrolment begins in accordance with the dates on the Annual Admission Notice, which is published on the school website each January.
- The most up-to-date supporting documents will then be requested by the school
- Completing the Expression of Interest Form does not constitute an offer of a place in any class in St. Brigid's N.S.
- In line with legislation, parents/guardians will be informed by email of the decision of the Board of Management within 21 days of the closing date as per the Annual Attendance Notice.
- Parents/guardians will be given two weeks to accept an offer of a place in the Autism Classes in St. Brigid's N.S.
- All unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list, per the above criteria, in the event places may become available later. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of their position on the waiting list. All unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.
- After the acceptance of an offer, a meeting will be arranged between the parents/guardians and the relevant school personnel to discuss appropriate resources and supports that will best facilitate the inclusion of children with Autism into mainstream classes, according to their level of need and attainment.

NOTE:

In the event of a pupil with an Autism diagnosis currently enrolled in a mainstream class in St. Brigid's N.S. who subsequently require a placement in an Autism Class, the Board of Management reserves the right to offer a place to this child, as soon as a place becomes available.

Oversubscription to the Autism Classes

Where a place becomes available in one of the Autism classes, priority will be given to children at that level according to the following criteria:

Priority Category 1: Children with an Autism diagnosis currently enrolled in a mainstream class in St. Brigid's N.S.

Priority Category 2: Children with an Autism diagnosis who are siblings or step siblings of children currently enrolled in St. Brigid's N.S.

Priority Category 3: Children with an Autism diagnosis living within the catchment area as outlined in our general enrolment policy. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

Priority Category 4: Children with an Autism diagnosis of current staff members. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

Priority Category 5: Children with an Autism diagnosis outside the parish of Our Lady Mother of the Church Parish, Castleknock but within the Dublin 15 area. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

Priority Category 6: All other applicants. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

Discharge Policy

- It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the Autism Classes when they have completed eight years of primary education.
- In line with NCSE advice, the school will review each pupil's progress at the end of every academic year to determine whether the Autism Class continues to be an appropriate placement for them and to discharge the pupil from their Autism Class if the placement is not in the best interests of the pupil and/or the other pupils in the class.
- Discharge from the Autism classes may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

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 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 preschool or preschool service other than in relation to a student's previous attendance at an early intervention class
- b) the payment of fees or contributions to the school
- c) a student's academic ability, skills, or aptitude other than in relation to admission to the Autism classes insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned
- d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills, or aptitude of a student's parents/guardians
- e) a requirement that a student, or their parents or guardians, attend an interview, open day, or other meetings as a condition of admission
- f) a student's connection to the school by a member of their family attending or having previously attended the school; other than siblings or step-siblings of a student attending or having attended the school as per Enrolment Criteria
- g) the date and time on which the school received an application for admission. 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. Brigid's 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 Expression of Interest Form received before or during the period specified in our annual admission notice.

(Please see [section 14](#) below concerning applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) below concerning 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 **by email** 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 reason will be communicated by email to the applicant.

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. Brigid'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.

Acceptance for a place(s) in St. Brigid's N.S. must be received by the date set out in the Annual Admission Notice.

Acceptances should be emailed to registration@saintbrigids.ie or posted to

The Principal
St. Brigid's N.S.,
Beechpark Lawn,
Castleknock,
Dublin 15.
D15 P820

11. CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH OFFERS MAY NOT BE MADE OR MAY BE WITHDRAWN

An offer of admission may not be made or an offer may be withdrawn by St. Brigid's N.S. where:

- a) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- b) 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.
- c) the parent or guardian of a student, when required by the principal per section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm via Aladdin that the [code of behaviour](#) of the school is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- d) 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 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 the school received an application for admission.
- ii. the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school
- iii. the date on which an applicant accepted an offer of admission.
- iv. a student's personal details, including their 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 LISTS 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. Brigid's N.S. were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled. It will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Brigid'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.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

Offers of any subsequent places available for and during the school year in which admission is sought will be made to those students on the waiting list according to the priority 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 under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision regarding their application no later than three weeks from the date the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. If no place is available, the applicant's name will be added to the waiting list as set out in [Section 15](#).

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:

- (a) Parents and guardians wishing to apply for places in all other classes (Senior Infants – 6th class) should contact the school office to give their contact details and to request an Expression of Interest Transfer Form. It is advised that applicants should apply well in advance of the commencement of the school year.
- (b) A completed Expression of Interest Transfer Form and relevant documents, as outlined, will be accepted at any time during the school year.
- (c) The application will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.
- (d) When places are available, applications will be offered to children immediately.
- (e) When classes are full, a waiting list is held and children are placed on that list until a place becomes available.
- (f) When places become available and in the event of oversubscription, the selection criteria will be as follows:

Priority Category 1: Children previously enrolled in St. Brigid's who are returning from approved specialised education placements (i.e. Reading / Language Unit) in another mainstream school.

Priority Category 2: Children previously enrolled in St. Brigid's, whose parents had to relocate to their home country for a period of time or who were transferred elsewhere/abroad for work related reasons.

Priority Category 3: Children of school-going age who are newly arrived to the Parish of Our Lady Mother of the Church, Castleknock and do not already have a place in a Dublin 15 school.

Priority Category 4: Children of school-going age who are newly arrived in the Parish of Our Lady Mother of the Church, Castleknock and who have a sibling already enrolled in St. Brigid's N.S.

Priority Category 5: All other applicants.

Available places will be allocated in sequence, starting with Priority Category 1. If two or more children in the same category are tied for a place, the eldest child will have priority.

16. DECLARATION IN RELATION TO THE NON-CHARGING OF FEES

The Board of Management of St. Brigid's N.S. or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions 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 PUPILS NOT ATTENDING RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

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

A request should be made to the Principal of the school and a meeting will be arranged to discuss how the request can be accommodated by the school if at all possible.

18. REVIEWS/APPEALS

REVIEWS OF DECISIONS BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The student's parent or guardian, 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.

Requests to the Board of Management to review a decision to refuse admission must be made in writing no later than ten (10) calendar days from the date the school notified the parents of the refusal. The correspondence must be addressed to

The Chairperson of the Board of Management,
St Brigid's N.S.,
Beechpark Lawn,
Castleknock.
Dublin 15,
D15P820

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent 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.