



# Scoil Naomh Lorcán O'Tuathail

## (St. Laurence O'Toole's National School)

Roundwood, Co. Wicklow. Tel/Fax: 01 281 8399 | Email: roundwoodns@gmail.com | Web: roundwoodns.ie

### Admissions Policy (16634H)

#### 1. Introduction

The Board of Management hereby sets out its Admission Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018, the Education Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the Board of Management has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school. This policy was approved by the Board of Management on 31st January 2023.

This Admissions Policy must be read in conjunction with the Annual Admission Notice for the school year concerned and with other school policies, including our Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement, Anti-Bullying Policy and Special Educational Needs Policy. The relevant dates and timelines for the admission process are set out in the 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.

A hardcopy of this policy, the Annual Admission Notice and an Application Form for Admission are all available from the school office and on the school's website [www.roundwoodns.ie](http://www.roundwoodns.ie).

#### Aims

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

#### 2. Characteristic spirit and Mission Statement

St Laurence O'Toole's National School is a Catholic, co-educational school under the patronage of Archbishop Dermott Farrell. It has a commitment to diversity and inclusivity while, at the same time, protecting the integrity and Catholic ethos of the school. In accordance with section 15(2)(b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St Laurence O'Toole'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. '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 harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupils, 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,

Religious education is provided for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

### ***Mission Statement***

The Board of Management and staff take pride in the school's ethos which affords equal value to all pupils thus encouraging mutual respect and concern for each other in a safe and happy environment. The school staff members strive to develop a good sense of moral values in our pupils which can form a framework for developing self-esteem, healthy personal relationships, and age-appropriate level of participation thus setting them on their way to becoming responsible members of society.

The school aims to provide a challenging, yet supportive environment to stimulate, maintain and develop inquiring minds encouraging all to reach their full potential to become independent learners with a positive attitude to life-long learning. The school community values initiative and independence of thought and helps pupils to appreciate human achievements, failures and aspirations.

The school's Admissions Policy is inclusive, and all members of the school community are expected to respect each other knowing that this inclusive ethos is truly a positive experience for all. The school strives to offer as broad a curriculum as is possible catering for and differentiating for all abilities.

### **3. Admission Statement**

St Laurence O'Toole's National School will not discriminate in its admission of a pupil to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,

- (h) the Traveller community ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil 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 Laurence O'Toole'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 pupil, a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St Laurence O'Toole's National School, 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 of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required to do so by the council.

St Laurence O' Toole's National School will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998.

#### **4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school**

St Laurence O'Toole's NS with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), in September 2020.

Other children with special educational needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to the Board of Management. Every child is supported as far as possible and in accordance with our Special Educational Needs Policy to be included in the class curriculum and to participate in the activities of the school.

In relation to applications for admissions of children with a disability or special needs, the Board shall request a copy of the child's medical and/or psycho-educational report(s). Where these reports are not available, the Board will request that the child be assessed by a suitably qualified person and a report provided. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required. The Board will endeavour to have all resources and support in place before the child is admitted to the school.

The Board will do everything in its power to meet the needs as determined by the report, including the seeking of additional support from the Department of Education and Skills. The

Board will ensure that parents/guardians are fully informed of the provisions of the Education Act 1998 under Section 15 regarding the admission of pupils with special needs and the right of appeal under Section 29.

## 5. Admission of Pupils

This school shall admit each pupil seeking admission except where:

- a) the school is oversubscribed
- b) a parent 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.
- c) The special class within the school which provides education for students with ASD and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

## 6. Oversubscription

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:

Priority	Criterion
<b>1</b>	Priority is given to brothers and sisters of children already in the school. If the class is oversubscribed based on this criterion, then places will be allocated based on age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
<b>2</b>	Families whose primary residence is either (a) in the immediate areas of Roundwood Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish or (b) in Roundwood Parish within a bus radius from the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this criterion, then the furthest from the school under either (a) or (b) will be eliminated first.
<b>3</b>	Children of current staff. If the class is oversubscribed based on this criterion, then places will be allocated based on age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
<b>4</b>	All other children from outside the Roundwood Parish area. If the class is oversubscribed based on this criterion then places will be allocated based on age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.

## **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 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 pre-school service
- b) The payment of fees or contributions 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 parents
- e) A requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend and 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
- g) The date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school (subject to being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the (Annual Admission Notice)

## **8. Decisions on Applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to St Laurence O'Toole's National School will be based on the following:

- Our Admission Policy
- Our Annual Admission Notice
- 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

## **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 St Laurence O'Toole's National School, you must indicate:

- 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
- 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.

### **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 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 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'.

### **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:

- (a) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (b) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (c) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all the following:

- (a) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school
- (b) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school
- (c) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant
- (d) 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 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 Laurence O'Toole's National School 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.

### **14. Late Applications**

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be offered a place if there is one available. If there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the end of the waiting list.

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.

#### **15. Procedures for admission by pupils to other years during the school year**

The Board of Management respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. Consequently, the Board reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class and in the school, 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 needs
- Department of Education & Science class size directives
- Time of school year

The following procedures apply:

- a) Enrolment form is completed and returned to the school
- b) The criteria for admission are the same as for Junior Infant admissions and applicants will be assessed according to such selection criteria
- c) The Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management, assesses space in a class considering all criteria as listed above
- d) Applicants will be offered a place, or not, in written form with reasons for refusal if necessary outlined.

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

The Board, or any persons acting on its behalf, will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of:

- an application for admission of a pupil to the school, or
- the admission or continued enrolment of a pupil in the school.

#### **17. Arrangements regarding pupils not attending religious instruction**

The following are the school's arrangements for pupils, where the parent/guardian has requested that the pupil attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction of the school day of such students:

- A written request should be made to the Principal of the school, as per our Religious Education Policy and noted within the initial Application Form for Enrolment
- Due to a lack of supervision resources it is impossible for the child to be removed from the classroom during R.E. lessons. Pupils will complete another activity while R.E is going on. This can consist of either work provided by the family (other religious instruction or otherwise) or work provided by the class teacher.
- A meeting may be arranged with the parents/guardians to discuss how this request may be accommodated by the school.

## **18. Review of decisions by the Board of Management**

Parents/guardians 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 of the pupil 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.

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.

## **19. Evaluation**

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

- Effective management placed on application process
- Clarity and transparency relating to the process
- Applicants informed in good time re the status of their application, particularly in the case of refusal to enrol
- Positive Parental feedback

### **Monitoring Procedures**

This policy will be monitored by the Board of Management regularly. The Board will prepare and publish an Annual Admission Notice for the coming school year. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment each year and regularly thereafter until enrolment is complete. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to her by the Board 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 as appropriate to meet the needs of the school community.

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jamie Fitzmaurice', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

**Jamie Fitzmaurice (Chairperson of the BOM)**

**31st January 2023**