



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)

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.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 7th 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.

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.

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

Characteristic spirit and Mission Statement

St Laurence O'Toole's National School is a Catholic, co-educational school under the patronage of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin. 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.

Admissions 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.

With the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, a class has been established to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), specified by the Minister and the school may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified. Please refer to our Enrolment for Special Class Policy.

Admission Procedures

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.

Criteria for Enrolment

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
1	Priority is given to siblings, stepsiblings, foster siblings of children already in the school and children resident in the parish*. 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. <i>*see appendix for parish boundaries</i>
2	Siblings, stepsiblings, foster siblings of past pupils of 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.
3	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.
4	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.

If there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above, places will be allocated through a lottery system. This will be verified by an independent person, eg, a member of the Parents Association.

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 pre-school 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)

Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission will be based on the following:

- Our Admissions 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

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.

Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, with the timeline outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice. A provisional offer of a place will be made subject to requested documentation being received by the school.

Parents/Guardians wishing to accept the provisional offer of their place must enclose the following with their reply:

- Completed Enrolment Form – including parental check-list agreement form
 - Birth Certificate/Adoption Certificate (a copy will suffice)
 - Baptismal Certificate – where applicable (a copy will suffice)
- Evidence of residence within the Roundwood Parish***
- An original Gas or Electricity Bill in the name of either or both parents/guardians, dated within three months of the acceptance date, (where bills are received electronically, parents/guardians must sign the printed copy of the e-bill when submitting) and
 - any one of the following, in the name of either or both parents/guardians, dated within three months of the acceptance date:
 - an original bank statement
 - an original Tenancy Agreement
 - an original document issued by a Government Department eg Revenue, Social Welfare
 - an original valid TV Licence

The closing date for receipt of all acceptance documentation will be given in the provisional letter of offer. Acceptances will be deemed incomplete if all requested documentation and information has not been received by this closing date. The Board of Management reserves the right to request further documentation in support of the application. The onus rests on the applicant to prove conclusively to the Board of Management that all documentation is accurate and correct. A final letter to Parents/Guardians confirming the offer of a place will be made when the Board of Management is satisfied that the applicant has provided sufficient documentation.

If a child 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.

Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission, parents/guardians must indicate:

- whether or not an offer of admissions has been accepted for another school or schools. If such an offer has been accepted details of the offer or offers concerned must be provided, and
- whether or not parents/guardians have applied for and are awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools. In such a case, details of the other school or schools concerned must be provided.

Circumstances in which offers may or may not 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'.

Admissions Procedures for Special Classes that support children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

The Board of Management made the decision to provide specialised education within a mainstream setting for children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder, who fulfil the enrolment criteria and for whom a place may be made available. The purpose of these classes is to support children with ASD, who are experiencing, or would experience, difficulty in a mainstream class setting, to access the curriculum and maximise their potential for learning and personal development. These classes also serve to prepare children with ASD to re-integrate into the mainstream school setting. Therefore, enrolment to these classes will only be available to children with ASD who, with the supports available in St Laurence O'Toole's National School, will have the capacity to, at least, partially integrate into a mainstream class.

These procedures are set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998, the Education Welfare Act, 2000, the Equal Status Act, 2000, the Disabilities Act, 2002, the Education of Persons with Special Needs Act, 2004 and other relevant legislation and circulars. These procedures aim to assist parents/guardians in relation to admission matters concerning our special classes that support children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Admissions Procedures

Dates for the receipt of applications is set out in our Annual Admissions Notice which is available from the school secretary and posted on our school website roundwoodns@gmail.com.

A completed application form must be accompanied by all of the supporting documentation listed previously and also including:

- A diagnosis from a psychiatrist, psychologist, or a member of a Multi-Disciplinary team that has assessed and classified the child as having autism or autistic spectrum disorder meeting DSM IV/V or diagnostic criteria. Cognitive ability will not be taken into consideration when these criteria are met.
- A recommendation by a member of the Multi-Disciplinary Team in the report that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child.
- Any other relevant reports – speech and language/occupational therapy and psychological report

Criteria for Admission to Special Classes

Admission to these classes will only be available to children with ASD who, with the supports available in St Laurence O’Toole’s, will have the capacity to, at least, partially integrate into a mainstream class.

The maximum class size in our current special class is three pupils. If the number of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order, beginning with number one – subject to meeting all the criteria and completing all the procedures outlined in this policy

Priority	Criterion
1	<p>Children with an ASD diagnosis currently enrolled in the school.</p> <p><i>If the number of applicants in category 1 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:</i></p> <p><i>1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.</i></p> <p><i>2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.</i></p>
2	<p>Children with an ASD diagnosis living within the catchment area as outlined in our general enrolment policy.</p> <p><i>If the number of applicants in category 2 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:</i></p> <p><i>1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.</i></p> <p><i>2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.</i></p>
3	<p>If spaces are still available, places will be allocated as to children with an ASD diagnosis from outside the catchment area.</p> <p><i>If the number of applicants in category 3 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:</i></p> <p><i>1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.</i></p> <p><i>2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.</i></p>

Decisions on Applications

The application will undergo team assessment by the Admission Team. The admission team is made up of the Principal, the Deputy Principal and a member of the Special Education Team, as selected by the principal, to ensure that the application fulfils the enrolment criteria outlined in this policy. A recommendation of be made by the Admissions Team in relation to each application to the Board of Management of the school. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management and the decision is final.

Offer of Placement

When a place becomes available the parents and principal will complete the “Notification to NCSE of enrolment in a special class”. This is Form 7 available on www.ncse.ie

The parents/guardians of the child must accept and agree to the school’s Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

If prior to enrolment it transpires that the school cannot meet the required needs of the child for placement in our ASD classes, the child will not be enrolled in the school and the following actions will take place:

- The school will notify in writing, the parents/guardians of the rationale for the decision
- The school will notify the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) of the decision and the requirements necessary for the school to meet the specified needs of the child,

If, during the year, it transpires that the school cannot meet the required needs of the child, the child will not be re-enrolled for the following school year and the following actions will take place:

- The school will notify in writing, the parents/guardians of the rationale for the decision
- The school will notify the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) of the decision and the requirements necessary for the school to meet the specified needs of the child.

Post Acceptance

- The parents/guardians of a child being offered a place in the class may be requested by the school to consent to a visit by the staff to a child’s pre-school/school/home setting to observe the child
- The parents/guardians will be invited on another occasion to come with their child to the class to meet with staff and see the classroom.
- After an initial phase of observation, a relevant Individual Education Plan will be provided for the child. This plan will have input from all parties involved with the

education of the child and will be supported by a psychologist from the National Education Psychology Service (NEPS) team.

- The Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) will also be made aware of the plan.
- The plan will be regularly reviewed and updated by staff.
- A child may be phased in gradually to the ASD class through a mutually agreed process between the school and the parents of the child. It is important that every child gets the best possible start in the class. In order to achieve this, the duration of the child's day may vary depending on his/her needs.
- Each child in the ASD class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes.

Behaviour

It is accepted that children with special educational needs may display difficult, defiant or oppositional behaviours. All efforts will be made by the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the child's Individual Education Plan. All pupils including pupils with special needs and pupils without special needs are subject to the school Code of Behaviour and Health and Safety Statement. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the ASD class or another mainstream class to the extent that their constitutional right to an education is being interfered with as judged by the Board of Management of the school, the school reserves the right to advise parents that a more suitable setting should be found for their child.

The school endeavours to support each child on an individual basis and ensure that it is an appropriate school placement for the child. However, if it is the opinion of the Board of Management that the student poses an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of other student, to school staff or to school property, a decision may be made not to enrol the child and/or exclude the child from the school.

Support by Outside Agencies

Parents/guardians, please note that a guarantee of support by outside agencies such as the HSE cannot be provided. Children who require speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, etc., will be dependent on the local HSE services or Enable Ireland Services. The school does not have the resources to follow up on these services and it is up to the parents/guardians to ensure that all possible services are being availed of.

Discharge Policy for children in Special Classes

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the special classes for children with ASD once they have reached the age of twelve. Pupils who reach the age of twelve after September 30th in any year will be permitted to complete that academic year. This means a June discharge in the following year. Discharge may also be recommended after the first year if the admissions team, after consultation with the parents/guardian, feel that placement is

not appropriate. Discharge from the special classes may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

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).

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 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 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 in order of the date of receipt of the application. Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application.

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.

Procedures for admission during the current school year and for Senior Infants-6th class

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
- Department of Education & Science class size directives

The following procedures apply:

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

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.

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
- A meeting may be arranged with the parents/guardians to discuss how this request may be accommodated by the school on a 'case by case' basis.

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

Parents/guardians may request the Board of Management 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 of Management 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.

Evaluation and review

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

- Effective management placed on application process
- Clarity and transparency relating to the process

Monitoring Procedures

This policy will be monitored by the Board of Management regularly. The Board of Management 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 of Management in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

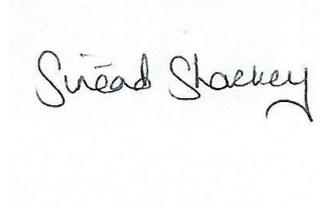
Review Procedure

The policy will be reviewed as appropriate to meet the needs of the school community.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light background. The signature is stylized and appears to read 'Jamie Fitzmaurice'.

Jamie Fitzmaurice (Chairperson of the BOM)

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light background. The signature is written in a cursive style and clearly reads 'Sinéad Sharkey'.

Sinéad Sharkey (Principal)

25th August 2020

Roundwood Parish Boundaries

