

Admission Policy of St. Olaf's National School,

Roll number: 193190

School Patron: Catholic Archbishop of Dublin

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on Wednesday 9th September 2020 and further amended on 17th December 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St. Olaf's National School's admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice, which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned. This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website (www.stolafs.ie) and will be made available by email or in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

- St. Olaf's National School is situated at Balally Drive, Dundrum, Dublin.16
- Our school is a mixed Catholic Primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Diarmuid Martin.. We promote the Roman Catholic ethos but welcome applications for enrolment from pupils of all faiths and none.

'Catholic Ethos' in the context of 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;
 - C. a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and 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. Olaf's NS shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.
- The school currently has 26 teachers including the Principal.

- We cater for boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 13 (Junior Infants – 6th Class) with a current enrolment of 522 pupils.
- Our aims are:
 - (a) To help pupils realise their potential and be confident of their own ability;
 - (b) To help our pupils to make decisions and to develop a sense of discipline;
 - (c) To encourage the uniqueness of each child and to help them to develop relationships with others around them;
 - (d) To celebrate the diversity of our pupils' differing cultural backgrounds.
- St. Olaf's N.S. depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Dept. of Education and Skills (DES) and operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. Consequently, our school policy must have regard to the resources and funding available to us at any given time.
- We follow the curricular programmes prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).
- Within the context and parameters of Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:
 - Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need.
 - Equality of access and participation in the school
 - Parental choice in relation to enrolment
 - Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society;

3. Admission Statement

St Olaf's National School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

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

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

All denominational schools

St. Olaf's NS is a Roman Catholic 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 of the Roman Catholic Faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

St. Olaf's NS is not a Special School or a mainstream school with a special class attached.

In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs, the Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical and /or psychological report after the offer has been accepted. The purpose of requesting these reports is solely to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her additional needs and to profile the support services that may be required, e.g. specialised furniture or equipment, visiting teacher service etc.

Children with special needs enrolling in St Olaf's N.S. will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to the Board of Management.

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 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

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.:

Order of Priority

1. Applications or expressions of interest which were received by the school before 1 February 2020 and which were confirmed in writing by the school that the applicant had been placed on a list for the purposes of allocating places in the year concerned, will remain valid and the school will apply the selection criteria based on that list at that time. However, such waiting lists will cease to

exist on 31 January 2025 as set out in the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018.

2. Brothers and sisters of children currently attending or who have previously attended our school (Siblings / stepsiblings): Children living in the Parish of Balally.
3. Children of current Staff members.
4. All other children who apply

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:

For admissions to Junior Infant classes in the scenario where the school is oversubscribed, the Board of Management will apply the selection criteria above, in the order of priority in which they are listed and in the event of a tie for the final place the Board will then determine the access to the final place by choosing the eldest of the tied applicants. In the event of more than one tied applicant having the same date of birth the Board of Management will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place, with an independent person present, and will keep remaining applicants on a waiting list for cancellations arising before the school year begins.

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 student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family having previously attended the school; (other than on (1) siblings / stepsiblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents of a student having attended the school.
In relation to (2) parents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school,

This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school

year concerned.

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

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Olaf's National School 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 application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see section 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing (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 reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see section 18 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Olaf's National School, you, the applicant, 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 to the principal of St. Olaf's National School and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for or 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 to the principal of St. Olaf's National School .

11. Circumstances in which admission's offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by St. Olaf's National School, 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 applicant's child; or
- (iv) 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.

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications than places available for any given school year, applicants who have reached the age of 4 years before 1st March in the year of enrolment will be prioritised and offered any available places first, taking into account the Order of Priority above. A waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Primary School 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 Primary 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.

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. The criterion date of birth of the child applying will only be applied in the case of children who are tied for the last place in the Junior Infants intake classes. When children are tied for the final places in classes above Junior Infants, after all of the criteria in section 5 of this policy are applied, lots will be drawn for the final place and remaining applicants will be kept on a waiting list for any places becoming available later.

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 the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

Parents Guardians complete an application form

Application is assessed by the BOM using the criteria in Section 5 of this admissions policy.

Admission will depend on space in the school and in the required class. **At the moment (September 2020)** the Board of Management of St. Olaf's National School adheres to a maximum **average** class size of 26 pupils per class, based on the relevant staffing circular from the Department of Education and Skills (Circular 18/2020).

St. Olaf's National School will be considered to be full when Enrolment reaches the number of Mainstream Class Teachers (20) x 26 (max average class size) = 520

A particular class will be considered to be full with 26 pupils in that class.

This will be amended in September 2021 as a consequence of the Government decision to reduce class sizes to 25 pupils per class.

As of September 2021, St. Olaf's National School will be considered to be full when Enrolment reaches the number of Mainstream Class Teachers (21) x 25 (max average class size) = 525

A particular class will be considered to be full with 25 pupils in that class.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

The procedures of the school in this instance include those in the table above. However St. Olaf's National School will recommend to applicants seeking places after September 30 each year and whose children are attending schools in the locality, that where possible, they retain their children in their current schools until the end of the instructional term (ie end of October, December, March)

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The Board of St. Olaf's National School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding students 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.:

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

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent/guardian of 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 For Education & Skills 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 student may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998, where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

Signed:

Donal Rochford

Chairperson Board Of Management Date 17/12//2020

This policy was ratified at our BOM meeting on 29th September 2020