

Kildangan NS Enrolment Policy

Introduction

The Board of Management of Kildangan National School hereby sets out its Enrolment Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Board of Management is the ultimate authority on the application and interpretation of this policy, which was reviewed, updated and ratified by the Board on the 18th September 2017.

**Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school.*

General School Information

- ***Name of School: Kildangan National School***
- ***Telephone No. 045 - 523536***
- ***Principal: Mrs Sheelagh Murphy***

Kildangan National School is under the Patronage of the Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin.

At present, the teaching staff is comprised of 8 Mainstream Teachers, 1 Principal Teacher, 3 Support Teachers and 2 Special Needs Assistants. The full range of classes are taught in the school and classes are of mixed gender.

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and it operates within the regulations laid down by the Department. This Enrolment Policy has regard to the resources and funding available.

Classes start at 8.55a.m. and finish at 2.35p.m. Infant Classes finish at 1.35p.m.

Rationale

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.*

Goals

The school shall have in place appropriate channels of communication and procedures;

- *To inform parents about the school, its programs, activities, and procedures*
- *To enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner.*
- *To put in place criteria under which applications shall be considered.*
- *To ensure that these criteria are informed by our Ethos, our Mission Statement & current legislation.*
- *To specify what information is required by the school at the time of application.*

Context, Resources, School Organization & Curriculum

The school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society. The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parent's choice, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of any applicant or student. It will make every effort to secure those resources – where the resources cannot be secured the school may refuse admission. The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil – teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

Policy Considerations

The Board of Management of Kildangan National School reserves the right to refuse admission if such admissions contravene Departmental guidelines, particularly on class size and or if they are not in keeping with this policy.

The school will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, special education needs, traveller status, refugee status, political or religious beliefs, family or social circumstances, provided the necessary supports are in place in the school.

The school will maintain a list of refused applicants for each class, their place on that list having been determined under the criteria outlined.

The Board of Management respects parental choice in relation to enrolment, provided the enrolment criteria are fulfilled.

The Board of Management has the responsibility to respect the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled in the school. Enrolments may not diminish the services and resources already available to existing pupils. Therefore decisions on admissions will be made in the best interests of all children.

Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class, 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 & Skills class size directives*
- *Appropriate Supports and Resources are available*
- *Time of school year*

Procedures – Application, Enrolment Criteria & Decision / Appeals

Admission to the school is subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources, and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission. Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources-where the resources cannot be secured; the school reserves the right to refuse admission. It is the responsibility of parents / guardians of any child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form for the child's own welfare. In this context the school authorities will have equal regard for the welfare of all the students and their right to an education in an atmosphere that is not detrimental to their physical, emotional, moral, social or intellectual development.

Junior Infant Enrolment Procedure

1. Application forms are available from the school secretary or on the school website www.kildanganschool.com. Prospective parents may also access this Enrolment Policy on the school website or request a copy of the policy from the school secretary.
2. The registration process is initiated on receipt by the school of a completed application. This includes the school's application form, copy of birth cert and proof of address. The application form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians. The form will be date-stamped on receipt by the school, and is attached as appendix 1 to this policy. Telephone calls or personal school visits concerning enrolment will be facilitated, but are not in themselves enrolment applications.
3. Date of application, child's date of birth, address and telephone contact numbers are recorded in the School Record of Applications.
4. Entry in the School Record of Applications means that an application will be processed in early March of the relevant enrolment year and will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy. The process of offering places will only begin after the official closing date.
5. Applications will be processed when proof of current address has been provided. The Board may seek further evidence of residency if in any doubt of address. It is the parent's duty to provide accurate information. Submitting inaccurate, false or misleading information will render the application null and void.
6. Following this evaluation, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board, listing proposed enrolments for the forthcoming year. Once an enrolment list is approved by the Board, all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome, which may include an offer of a place or a notice that a child has been placed on a waiting list. If a child has not received a place, the school will notify the parent of their entitlement to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
7. Those who are offered places are asked to accept within a 2 week period.

Please note:

Applications for admission to Junior Infant Class must be made by the closing date, which is the **15th February** each year. Failure to apply before the closing date or to provide proof of residency before the closing date will automatically rule applicants out of the Enrolment Process.

Selection Criteria

In Kildangan NS, the Board of Management is working towards a maximum capacity of 28 pupils per class, commencing with the forthcoming intake of pupils in 2018/19.

The following order of priority will be implemented in the enrolment of children into Junior Infants:

- 1. Siblings of children who are already part of the school community. All new applicants must have reached his/her 4th birthday by the 31st March of the year of entry. Priority will be given to the oldest.*
- 2. Children who are resident in Kildangan and its historically affiliated townlands. Please see the map attached. Each child must have reached his/her 4th birthday by the 31st March of the year of entry. Priority will be given to the oldest.*
- 3. Children who are not resident in Kildangan or its historically affiliated townlands are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the groups from (1) to (2) have been allocated. Such applicants will be allocated places based on the distance at which they live from the townland boundary and according to the date on which the application was received by the school. Each applicant must have reached his/her 4th birthday by the 31st March of the year of entry. Please see the map attached.*
- 4. Children of staff members are entitled to a place if there are any vacancies after the groups from (1) to (3) have been allocated places. Priority will be given to the oldest.*

Enrolment Procedure for students who wish to transfer from another school:

- *Application forms are available from the school secretary or on the school website www.kildanganschool.com*
- *Applications can only be made during the school term, up to the **15th of June** each year. A decision on enrolment will be provided by the Board within 21 days of receipt of application. Any applications received after the 15th June each year will be processed in **August** and the Board will endeavor to provide a decision by the **21st of August**. Such applications are processed as late applications and these will be ordered, based on date and time received.*
- *The registration process is initiated on receipt by the school of a completed application. This includes the school's application form, copy of birth cert and proof of address. This form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians. The form will be date stamped on receipt by the school, and is attached as appendix 1 to this policy.*
- *Applications will be processed when proof of current address has been provided. The Board may seek further evidence of residency if in any doubt of address. It is the parent's duty to provide accurate information. Submitting inaccurate, false or misleading information will render the application null and void.*
- *The behaviour record of a student in their previous school shall be considered.*
- *The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall be considered.*
- *The Principal will take the Enrolment Application to the Board of Management for consideration. The application will be considered, bearing in mind the appropriate age of the class. Repeating a level is permitted only in exceptional circumstances and with DES approval. The Board will issue a decision in writing, within 21 days from the date on which the application was received by the school.*

Selection Criteria:

In Kildangan NS, the Board of Management is working towards a maximum capacity of 28 pupils per class, commencing with the forthcoming intake of pupils in 2018/19.

Current classes, which have over 28 pupils will be maintained at their current enrolment number and will not be increased. The Board will not be able to accommodate additional applicants in such classes.

The following order of priority will be implemented in the enrolment of a child seeking to transfer into any class (Junior Infants – 6th Class), if there is a vacancy or in the event of one or more seeking a place in the same class:

1. *Siblings of children who are already part of the school community.*
2. *Children who are resident in Kildangan and its historically affiliated townlands.
Please see the map attached.*

3. *Children who are not resident in Kildangan or its historically affiliated townlands are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the groups from (1) to (2) have been allocated. Such applicants will be allocated places based on the distance at which they live from the townland boundary and according to the date on which the application was received by the school. Please see the map attached.*
4. *Children of staff members are entitled to a place if there are any vacancies after the groups from (1) to (2) have been allocated places.*

All children enrolled are expected to comply with and support the school's Code of Behaviour, as well as the school's designated policies on Curriculum, Organization and Management.

Exceptional Circumstances

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. For example such an exceptional case could arise either:

- a) *The pupil has needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education, or*
- b) *In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to school staff or to school property. The parents/guardians of any pupil who has been refused enrolment, for any reason, are entitled to appeal that refusal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and, in such circumstances, will be advised in writing of their entitlement to such an appeal.*

Appeals

- 1) *Parents/guardians who are unhappy with an enrolment decision may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed in writing to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal and lodged within 10 days of receiving the refusal letter.*
- 2) *If unhappy with the outcome of this appeal, they may then appeal to the Department of Education and Skills on the official form provided by the Department, which is available to download from <https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/Appeal-against-Permanent-Exclusion-Suspension-or-Refusal-to-Enrol/> This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of the receipt of the refusal letter from the school to:
Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit,
Department of Education and Skills,
Friar's Mill Road,
Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath*

Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy:

Role of Board of Management

- *To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed*
- *To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementations and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.*
- *To decide on appeals by parents or students with respect to any decision(s) made by the Principal/Board of Management*
- *To prepare (and submit to the Education Welfare Board) a statement of Strategies regarding Attendance. The Statement of Strategy will have regard to guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board and will set out the measures the Board of Management proposes to adopt*
 - a) *For the purposes of fostering and appreciation of learning among students attending the school and*
 - b) *Encouraging regular attendance at the school on the part of all students*

Role of the Principal

- *To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, students, parents, Board and Trustees*
- *To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review date*
- *To implement the policy and to support other teaching staff in their implementation of the policy*
- *To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with government policies*
- *To ensure, within the constraints of available resources, that alternative programs are devised where necessary and practicable to meet the needs of students*
- *To appraise the policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate*
- *To ensure a register of all students attending the school is established and maintained*
- *To ensure that a record of attendance or non-attendance is maintained for each student registered at this school and, in the case of non-attendance, the reason for same*
- *Prior to registering a child, to provide the parents of an applicant with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and ensure that the parent confirm in writing their acceptance of the Code of an assurance that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child*
- *To provide, on request, to any parent of a child registered in the school with a copy of the Code of Behaviour*
- *Where a child is refused admission, to advise the parents of their right of appeal to the Trustees and the Department of Education setting out Title and Address of each and advising of time limits*

Role of Teaching staff

- *To co-operate with the implementation of this policy*
- *To take the needs of all students into account in the way in which they select textbooks, plan and teach their lessons and conduct assessments*
- *To bring concerns about Special Needs curricular matters and information to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Special Needs Teacher*
- *To keep parents informed through the regular Parent / Teacher Meetings and School Reports and by meeting parents from time to time as required.*
- *To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate*

Role of Parents

- *To support the policy and to co-operate fully with the school in its implementation*
- *To bring to the attention of the school authorities any concern they may have in relation to the school's provision for the educational needs of their child*
- *To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and effectiveness and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.*

Role of Students

- *To co-operate fully with the school in the implementations of the policy*
- *To offer suggestions for improving the service to students with special needs*

Legal Framework

Section 9 (j) of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that "A recognized school shallSubject to this Act and in particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school".

Section 15 (2) (d) states the Board of Management shall "publish The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice are respected".

Section 27 (1) states that "A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school" and (2) that "the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers".

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 [Section 19 (1)] requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school's

Admission Policy. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information “make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof”

The Equal Status Act, 2000 [Sections 5 & 7 (2)] prohibits discrimination on the grounds of “gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community” regarding admission, access to programs, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values [Section 7 (3)].

Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular 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

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff and the Parents Association at the same time. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment in December 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, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

Review Procedure

The policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and a copy will be submitted to the Patron. Next review of this policy will occur during the school year of 2018/2019.

