



## **Admission Policy of Holy Well National School**

**Ballea Road, Carrigaline, Co. Cork.**

**20550A**

**School Patron: Most Rev. Fintan Gavin, Bishop of Cork and Ross**

### **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 in August 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 Holy Well 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 link to the online application form for admission is published on the school's website and hardcopy is available on request to any person who requests it.

### **2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

Holy Well NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic Primary School means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- a) The full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- b) A living relationship with God and with other people; and
- c) A philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- d) The formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or 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, 1988 the Board of Management of Holy Well 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.

Mission Statement and General Objectives to be decided

As we are a new school formed in September 2020 following the amalgamation of St John's GNS and Scoil Mhuire Lourdes BNS our mission statement and general aims and objectives will be agreed upon following consultation with all stakeholders.

### **3. Admission Statement**

Holy Well NS 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.

Holy Well NS 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 student a person who is not a Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Holy Well NS with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established three classes, which provide an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

Holy Well NS, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established three classes to provide an education exclusively for students with autism spectrum disorder within the mild range of learning disability. The maximum number of pupils in each class is six. In determining the level of admissions to the ASD Classes, the Board shall take account of Department of Education & Skills

(‘DES’) regulations/circulars in relation to staffing, class size and pupil teacher ratios; health and safety requirements; it shall also have regard to issues such as physical space, age range within the class, behavioural needs, the number of pupils expected to leave the class, the size of classrooms/play areas/school premises, the deployment of teachers and the resources of the School.

The following criteria for admission to the ASD classes apply:

1. An applicant must have a primary diagnosis of a qualifying autism spectrum disorder and must submit a professional report, which confirms a diagnosis of a qualifying autism spectrum disorder (DSM IV/V or ICD 10). These reports must be recent and cannot be dated more than 18 months prior to the proposed admission date. Parents may be asked to furnish further up-to-date reports.
2. An applicant must also furnish the school with a recommendation to attend an ASD class attached to a mainstream school. Such a recommendation must be furnished by a professionally recognised clinical psychologist.
3. If the applicant presents with a general learning disability, it must fall within the mild range. This diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure and the report confirming this must be submitted with the application form.
4. All online forms for enrolment have been fully completed, digitally signed and submitted to the school by the Parents and a vacancy exists in the ASD Class. If the online forms are not fully completed, and/or all the required reports have not been furnished, the application will be deemed incomplete. The Parents will be notified that the application will not be considered, nor a place on the waiting list allocated, until a complete application is submitted.
5. When a complete online application is submitted, the date will be noted on the application form and an acknowledgement e-mail will be sent indicating that the application has been allocated a reference number and a place on the waiting list.
6. If offered a place, the Parents must confirm in writing within 7 calendar days that the place is being accepted. If this confirmation is not received within that time, the school will take it that the place is not being accepted and the place will be reallocated.
7. Places are allocated in the ASD Class on the condition that the appropriate resources are provided and continue to be provided, by the NCSE and the DES. If the ASD classes are oversubscribed, places will be allocated as set out in Section 6.1 below provided in the first instance that the applicant meets all of the criteria listed above. A waiting list will be maintained for the duration of the academic year only, for which the initial application was made.

## 4.1 Inclusion

- It is hoped that pupils enrolled in the ASD classes will experience meaningful inclusion during their time in Holy Well NS. Inclusion of pupils with ASD into mainstream classes for some subjects will be considered on an individual basis. The provision of inclusion for the pupils is dependent on personnel resources, accommodation and on the priority needs of each pupil.

The child's first year in the ASD Class will be used to:

- Assess the child's educational, social and emotional needs
- Develop an Individual Education Plan to address identified needs

## 4.2 Age Range

- A three-year age gap is the preferred maximum allowed between any two children within each class.

Due to the geographical location of our special classes age appropriateness will be particularly relevant in Holy Well NS as we endeavour to provide meaningful integration opportunities to mainstream classes for all the children in the special classes.

## 4.3 Discharge from ASD Classes

- Discharge of pupils from the ASD Classes will usually take place once they have completed eight years of primary education but no later than the academic year of their fourteenth birthday.
- Discharge from the ASD Classes may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

## 4.4 Placement Review

- Regular reviews of the school's capability to continue to meet the pupil's needs in a way that ensures that the pupil develops to his/her potential may be necessary. Parents will be kept fully informed of any concerns that might arise at the earliest opportunity.
- Should these concerns continue the school shall request that a multi-disciplinary team assessment be carried out to determine the best options open to the pupil.
- If the School and its related professional support team were of the opinion that the pupil's needs were not being met in the class, in consultation with the pupil's parents/guardians, an alternative placement would need to be considered in the best interest of the child.
- The final decision rests with the Board of Management

## 5. Admission of Students

Holy Well NS 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

Holy Well NS is a Roman Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not a Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special classes attached to Holy Well NS provide an education exclusively 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:

- a) Pupils from the Carrigaline catchment area who are siblings of pupils already enrolled in Holy Well NS (*this includes children who have been fostered by parents of already enrolled children*) and who are 4 years of age on or before the 31st of March in the year of admission.
- b) Children of current staff members, who are 4 years of age on or before the 31st of March in the year of admission.
- c) Children who are 4 years of age on or before the 31st of March in the year of admission, who are resident in our catchment area of Carrigaline parish on the first day of the first term in Junior Infants.
- d) Children of families who are not resident in the catchment area and are 4 years of age on or before 31st of March in the year of enrolment.
- e) Applicants who are late for the online submission stage or whose documentation (birth cert, proof of address, assessment reports) was submitted after Formal Registration stage (see Annual Admission Notice).

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:

- First preference will be given to those in section a), and if the number of places offered in this category reaches full capacity, then no more places will be offered. However, if there are more applicants than places who fit the enrolment criteria, then the oldest children will be offered places.
- If there are remaining places then offers will be made to applicants in section b), The oldest children in this category will be offered places until the total amount of places is filled.

- If there are remaining places, then offers will be made to applicants in section c). The oldest children in this category will be offered places until the total amount of places is filled.
- If there are remaining places, then offers will be made to applicants in section d) e) f). The oldest children in these categories will be offered places until the total amount of places is filled.

Once the offers are made in writing and accepted by the return of a signed form (see the Annual Admission Notice), a waiting list will be drawn up of the remaining applicants and offers will be made to these applicants only if one or more of the filled places do not accept their offer, or subsequently decline their offer at a later date.

## 6.1 Admission to Special Classes

If the number of children on the list of applicants to enrol in the special classes exceeds the number of places available the following criteria will apply:

- (a) Priority will be given to children currently enrolled in the School with an ASD diagnosis and who meet the terms of this policy. If the number of applicants from within the school exceeds the number of available places the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered: Suitability for enrolment considering the needs, age, abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.
- (b) In the event that the number of applications from children not currently enrolled in the school exceeds the number of available places, age appropriateness and the Priority Categories listed above in Section 6, are used to determine the priority given to applications.

## 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) 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;  
(other than in relation to:  
admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his 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 attending or having previously attended the school;  
(other than, in the case of the criteria based on siblings of a student attending or having attended the school
- (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 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 only).

## **8. Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to Holy Well NS will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official online application form and follow-up online forms 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 or 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 Holy Well NS, you must indicate—

(i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and 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 by Holy Well NS 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' 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 to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Holy Well NS 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 Holy Well NS 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.

## **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**

Applications for admission to classes on 1<sup>st</sup> September other than the school intake at Junior Infant level will be dealt with on an individual basis. Places will be dependent on

- a) A place being available in the particular class
- b) Compliance with the requirements of this Admissions Policy

Applications for admission during the school year will be considered only in the event that the school is not oversubscribed / space is available in the particular class.

All such applicants must comply with the requirements of this Admissions Policy

The Board of Management of Holy Well NS reserves the right to deem a class full

- When a class is at or above the pupil:teacher ratio as set out by the DES



- If it considers that the specific needs of a class are such that adding further pupil(s) to that class would impact on the educational attainment of the pupils already in said class.

In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may review the above.

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

The board of Holy Well NS 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 or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school by the parent(s) of the student(s). A meeting will then be arranged to advise the parent(s) as to how the school will accommodate the student(s) concerned.

## 18. Reviews/appeals

### **Review of decisions by the board of Management**

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

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

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

**Note:** Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

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

### **Right of appeal**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

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

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

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

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

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

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

This policy was drafted in consultation with the staff and parents in April 2020.

The policy was approved by the Interim Manager in April 2020

and by the patron in August 2020

Signed: *Angela Lynch* (Interim Manager)

Signed: *Aidan Crowley* (Principal)

Following a review in January 2021 this policy was amended and ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed: *Diarmuid Cogan* (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: *Aidan Crowley* (Principal)

This policy was reviewed and amended by the Board of Management on 09/06/2022.

Signed: *Diarmuid Cogan* (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: *Aidan Crowley* (Principal)

This policy was reviewed and amended by the Board of Management on 29/09/2022.

Signed: *Diarmuid Cogan* (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: *Aidan Crowley* (Principal)