

St. Attracta's National School Ballaghaderreen

19980S



Admissions Policy

School Patron: Bishop of Achonry

Updated January 2023

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 22 June 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 the St. Attracta's N.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 and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St. Attracta's N.S. is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Achonry.

"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:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- 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 religious education programme which the school provides 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. Attracta's N.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.

Our Mission Statement

St. Attracta's is a Catholic school that expresses a set of core values that can be described as human, religious, Christian and Catholic. These gospel values define our educational ethos. The educational vision which flows from these values is one which promotes the dignity, self-esteem and full development of each pupil as a human person. Such a Catholic educational vision is inclusive and respectful of all and confidently engages with people of all beliefs.

In keeping with the Schedule for Catholic Schools, we provide an education based on a living faith together tradition. Together, the Board, the principal and the staff, working with the

Patron, the parents and the local parish, model a living human-religious-Christian educational tradition, to nurture the faith of Catholic pupils in a manner that is welcoming to and inclusive of the presence in that Catholic school, of pupils committed to other religious traditions, or none.

Our Christian ethos also permeates the school day through our actions, attitudes and practices:

Our General Objectives

- We will provide high quality learning outcomes for all our pupils in accordance with their evolving individual strengths and needs.
- We will provide a safe, happy and learning focused environment where our pupils develop intellectually, spiritually, physically, morally and culturally. The promotion of pupil self-esteem and well-being informs all teaching and learning experiences.
- We will support the development and enhancement of the fundamental skills of literacy and numeracy which are crucial for learners to access the curriculum and for their future life chances.
- As prerequisites for life and for the workplace in the 21st century, we will proactively support our pupils to develop the ability to think critically and creatively, innovate and adapt to change, to work independently and in a team, and to be a reflective learner. A love of learning and an understanding of the importance of life-long learning is actively promoted.
- We will nurture our pupils' sense of identity and belonging. We value and celebrate diversity in our school and foster pupil respect, tolerance and inclusion for their peers regardless of race, gender, religion, or learning need. We promote local, national and global citizenship in our pupils.
- The core values underpinning our school community are respect, trust, inclusion and excellence.

3. Admission Statement

St. Attractas's N.S. 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.

St. Attracta's N.S. 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.

St. Attracta's N.S. will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required to do so by the Council.

St. Attracta's N.S. will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998.

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

Not applicable to St. Attracta's N.S. as it does not have a special class/es.

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) the child to be enrolled in Junior Infants is not 4 years of age by the 31st of March in the calendar year in which they plan to enrol.
- c) 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

St. Attracta's N.S. is a Roman Catholic primary school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Roman Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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:

Selection criteria

1. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April who have brothers, sisters or stepsiblings currently enrolled in the school.
2. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April and who qualify as a resident of Castlemore-Kilcolman Parish.

Note: Two of following documents dated within three months of the date of application must be supplied as proof of address: Bank Statement, Utility bill, e.g. electricity, or water.

3. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April and who are not included within the preceding categories and whose parent is a member of the staff of the school.
4. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April or older whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an O.S. map) where the child is normally resident outside of the Castlemore-Kilcolman Parish
5. 5. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April and who are not included in categories 1-4.

Note: The Board of Management currently operates a maximum average of 26 pupils per mainstream class, based on the staffing circular of the Department of Education and Skills Circular 18/2020

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:

The board of management will apply the four selection criteria in the order of priority in which they are listed. 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 will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place. Any remaining applicant will be retained on a waiting list for the school year in which admission is being sought.

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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
 - (I) an early intervention class, or
 - (II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitudes
- (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 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 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Attracta's N.S. 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 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 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

Using the acceptance template to provide by the school, successful applicants must confirm in writing that they accept the offer of admission to St. Attracta's N.S. When doing so 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 St. Attracta's N.S. 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
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.

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—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to St. Attracta's N.S. were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Attracta's N.S. 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 placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of 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.

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.

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. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

1. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

15 (A)

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 complete an application form.

Note: *The Board of Management currently operates a maximum average of 20 pupils per mainstream class, based on the staffing circular of the Department of Education and Skills Circular 25/2022.*

Selection Criteria – Senior Infants – 6th class

1. Children who have siblings currently enrolled in the school.
2. Children who qualify as a resident for the purposes of this Admission Policy within the Parish of Castlemore-Kilcolman.

Note: Two of following documents dated within three months of the date of application must be supplied as proof of address: Bank Statement, Utility bill, e.g. electricity, or water.

3. Children who are not included within any of the preceding categories and whose parent is a member of the staff of the school.
4. Children who reside in the local Emergency Refugee Orientation Centre (EROC)
5. Children who are not included in categories 1-4.

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:

The board of management will apply the four selection criteria in the order of priority in which they are listed. 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 will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place. Any remaining applicant will be kept on a waiting list for the school year in which admission is being sought.

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.

Parents complete an application form.

Note: *The Board of Management currently operates a maximum average of 26 pupils per mainstream class, based on the staffing circular of the Department of Education and Skills Circular 18/2020.*

Selection Criteria

1. Children who are currently enrolled in a Special Class/ ASD class in the school.
2. Children who have siblings currently enrolled in the school.
3. Children who qualify as resident for the purposes of this Admission Policy within the Parish of Castlemore-Kilcolman.

Note: Two of following documents dated within three months of the date of application must be supplied as proof of address: bank statement, utility bill, gas bill, electricity bill or water bill.

4. Children who are not included within any of the preceding categories and whose parent is a member of the staff of the school.
5. Children who are not included in categories 1-4.

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:

The board of management will apply the five selection criteria in the order of priority in which they are listed. 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 will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place. Any remaining applicant will be kept on a waiting list for the school year in which admission is being sought.

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

The board of St. Attracta's N.S. 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.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents have 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. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

17. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent 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 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 **within three weeks** of the date of the receipt of the refusal 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** within three weeks of the date of the receipt of the refusal 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 within three weeks of the date of the receipt of the refusal** 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.

18. Implementation and review

This policy will apply to school admissions for the 2023/2024 school year and subsequent years. The B.O.M. of St. Attracta's N.S. will periodically review this policy.

19. Policy ratification

Following approval by the school patron (see below), this policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Attracta's National School on 7th February 2023.

Signed: Fr. Paul Kivlahan, Chairperson B.O.M.

Signed: Mr. Noel Loftus, Principal

The contents of this policy have been approved by the following person acting on behalf of the Patron:

Signed: Bishop Paul Dempsey

Please note: As with all our school policies, this policy is also available in the school office to view as a signed hard copy.