

Admission Policy of

BALLYNEALE NATIONAL SCHOOL

Ballyneale, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary

Roll number: 18085K

School Patron: Bishop of Waterford and Lismore

1. Introduction

The Board of Management of Ballyneale National School hereby sets out its Admissions Policy which 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 14th September 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 Ballyneale 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

Ballyneale N.S. is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.

"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 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 Ballyneale 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.

Ballyneale N.S. has the welfare of the student in all matters as its primary objective. The aim of the school is to provide a safe, secure, structured and stimulating educational environment for each student. Thus the responsibility of the school is to help each student reach his/her fullest potential. This means fostering the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and cultural development of each student. It is recognised that the realisation of this ethos derives from the existence of a strong sense of community within the school where the staff feels valued and empowered. It also derives from a high level of co-operation among the partners in Education i.e. Department of Education, Board of Management, Principal, Staff and Parents – where the contribution of parents to the school is valued and encouraged. It depends intrinsically on the interest and positive support of Board of Management Members, Staff, Parents and Students.

Rationale

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school

1. 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
2. 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 and
3. 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

3.Admission Statement

Ballyneale 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.

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

Ballyneale National School is not a Special School or a Mainstream School with special classes attached.

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.

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

Note for Parents: the inclusion of the above wording was mandated by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.

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:

Priority	Criterion
1	Families whose primary residence is either in the immediate areas of Ballyneale Village and the Ballyneale/Grangemockler Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school, the furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
2	Families whose primary residence is outside the Parish but on the school bus route servicing Ballyneale N.S. where Ballyneale N.S. is the nearest school starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school the furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
3	Brothers and sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past. If the class is over subscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
4	Children of current teaching staff.
5	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this particular criterion, then those whose primary residence is furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
6	If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List, which is compiled and ordered according to the date of the original application. The criteria are listed in order of priority when spaces are allocated under criterion 1 and space is still available, then criterion 2 comes into play and so on. This prioritization proceeds until all places have been allocated.

Criteria for Enrolment to SI to 6th Classes

Priority	Criterion
1	Families whose primary residence is either in the immediate areas of Ballyneale Village and the Ballyneale/Grangemockler Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school, the furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
2	Families whose primary residence is outside the Parish but on the school bus route servicing Ballyneale N.S. where Ballyneale N.S. is the nearest school starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school the furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
3	Brothers and sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past. If the class is over subscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the

	oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
4	Children of current teaching staff.
5	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this particular criterion, then those whose primary residence is furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
6	If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List, which is compiled and ordered according to the date of the original application. The criteria are listed in order of priority when spaces are allocated under criterion 1 and space is still available, then criterion 2 comes into play and so on. This prioritization proceeds until all places have been allocated.

The following criteria will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places in the Senior Infants to 6 classes.

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:

- Priority to eldest in accordance with the above criteria – or as determined by BoM

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;
- (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 (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Ballyneale 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

In accepting an offer of admission from Ballyneale N.S. 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 Ballyneale 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
- (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.

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 Ballyneale 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 Ballyneale 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.

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:

Applications for enrolment during the school year will be considered subject to school policy, available space and the provision of information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress.

Such applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis but will normally only be considered for admission on the first day of each new term and must be ratified by a meeting of the Board of Management in advance unless the applicant is newly resident in the area.

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:

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 Ballyneale 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 Ballyneale 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.

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

The board of Ballyneale 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parent(s)/guardian(s) have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction

(etc.) 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)/guardian(s) of the student, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. 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** 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.

Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy:

Roles 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.
- 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 an 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 programmes 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 parent(s) of an applicant with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and ensure that the parent(s) confirm in writing their acceptance of the Code and 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 Board of Management and the Department of Education and Skills setting out the timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals as set out under section 29B of the Education Act 1998.

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 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

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 the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

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 implementation 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 at the same time.

Review Procedure

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every four years.

Communication/Circulation of Policy

This policy was produced in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000 and may be reviewed, revised or amended from time to time.

A copy of the policy was circulated to the Parent Association.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____.

Signed: _____

Fr. James Browne, Chairperson B.O.M.

Mr. Michael McHale, Principal

Date: _____