

# SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY

## DIOCESE OF KILDARE & LEIGHLIN



**NAME OF SCHOOL:** St. Conleth & Mary's Primary School

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**ROLL NUMBER:** 17872F

**PATRON:** Most Reverend Denis Nulty, Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin



### 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/guardians of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on XXX 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St. Conleth & Mary's Primary School 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.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

As St. Conleth & Mary's is a member of the Newbridge Central Applications Committee, all application forms, other than those for pupils already attending St Conleth's Infants School, must be completed and returned to the Parish Office in Newbridge Parish Centre on Station Road, Newbridge.

The application forms for admission are 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. Conleth & Mary's is a Catholic co-educational senior primary school (catering to students from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class) with a Catholic ethos. The Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin is the Patron of this school.

'Catholic schools are communities which are open, welcoming and inclusive. Therefore, Catholic schools may include children who adhere to other religions or other stances for living. While mindful of their duty to educate in the distinctive beliefs, values, and practices of the Catholic community, teachers will bear witness to an attitude of respect for and appreciation of all'.

*'The Catholic Preschool & Primary Religious Education Curriculum p15'*

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 which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Conleth & Mary's Primary School 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**

St. Conleth & Mary's Primary School is a caring learning environment where every child is welcomed, respected, cherished and facilitated in reaching their full potential as a unique individual.

We endeavour to make our school a safe and happy place where teaching and learning are paramount.

Staff, parents/guardians and community members work together to share in the holistic development of every pupil.

### **3. ADMISSION STATEMENT**

St. Conleth & Mary's Primary School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

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

- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

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

St. Conleth & Mary'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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Conleth & Mary's is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister 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**

St. Conleth & Mary's with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class/unit to provide an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

#### **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/guardian 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. Conleth & Mary'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.

The special class attached to St. Conleth & Mary's provides an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder 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:

1. Pupils already in a mainstream class in the school if they are transferring to the ASD unit in the school and/or children already in the ASD Unit in the school if they are transferring to a mainstream class in the school.
2. Whether there are siblings / step-siblings resident at the same address as the proposed new entrant already attending or having attended the school.

**Commented [A1]:** Think this should be the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018. In fact, the Act of '98 has only got 68 sections.

3. Children of staff employed in St. Conleth & Mary's and St. Conleth's Infant School at 30 May 2020<sup>1</sup>.
4. Children who have, in the year prior to admission, been attending St. Conleth's Infant School
5. Children living within the parish.
6. All others.

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), a lottery will be conducted by an independent person<sup>2</sup> to determine the allocation of place/s.

The Board of Management reserves the right to apply the above criteria in a manner that will ensure that no more than 60% of enrolments in any year group are of the same gender.

#### **Applications for Admission to the ASD Unit**

The ASD Unit at St Conleth and Mary's is for children with ASD who have been recommended for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream primary school and who have the potential to integrate into a mainstream, age appropriate class.

##### **Supporting Documentation**

As well as the information that needs to be provided in the **Admission Application Form**, all applications for admission to the Autism Unit must be accompanied by all of the following supporting documentation:

- A diagnosis of Autism / Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-IV/V or ICD 10 by the psychologist or team.
- A written psychological assessment / report (dated within the six months prior to the Application being submitted) or a written report from a multi-disciplinary team. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Social Worker and a Physiotherapist. Please note that all such reports on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team.
- A recommendation by the relevant professionals in the report that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child.

##### **Admissions Team**

All applications for admission to the Autism Unit will be considered by the Admissions Team. This team will include the School Principal, the Special Needs Coordinator and the Special Class Teacher/s. In assessing an application for admission, the Admissions Team may seek the advice of the school's allocated NEPS psychologist.

The function of the admissions teams is to:

- Ascertain how many places are to be filled in the ASD Class. The maximum number of pupils in the class will be 6 pupils.

<sup>1</sup> This means that those employed (including those on career break) in these two schools on 30 May 2020 benefit from this criterion. But those newly employed by the schools after this date do not so benefit.

<sup>2</sup> The 'Independent person' in this context will be selected having regard to Section 60 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.

- Review all applications and all documentation relevant to a child applying for a place in the ASD class.
- Verify the class's suitability in meeting the needs of the child.
- Verify that there is a recommendation from a psychologist for placement in a special class in a mainstream school.
- Verify the suitability of the child for potential meaningful integration in an age appropriate mainstream class.
- Identify qualifying applicants with reference to these criteria.
- Prioritise each qualifying applicant with reference to selection criteria – see **Section 6** above regarding the selection criteria that will be used in the case of oversubscription.
- To make a recommendation based on these findings to the Principal, who is responsible for implementation of this policy.

#### **Pupils Transferring**

Pupils may transfer to the ASD class from mainstream classes during the school year subject to the availability of places. The Admissions Team (see above) will decide on the appropriateness of such transfers.

Pupils transferring to the ASD Unit must enter the same class level that they are leaving, and have the necessary diagnosis and recommendations as outlined above.

#### **NOTE:**

All other terms of this School Admission Policy will apply to those on whose behalf an application for admission to the ASD Unit is made to St Conleth and Marys.

## **7 WHAT WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED OR TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT**

In accordance with section 62(7) (e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí.
- the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school.
- a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude, other than in relation 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.
- the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents/guardians.
- a requirement that a student, or his or her parents/guardians, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission.
- 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 is provided for at **6 1.** above in relation to siblings or step-siblings.
- the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school, 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 St. Conleth & Mary's will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application 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 as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

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

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

## **10 ACCEPTANCE OF AN OFFER OF A PLACE BY AN APPLICANT**

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Conleth & Mary'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 are awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

## **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. Conleth & Mary'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/guardian 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.

The list may include 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. Conleth & Mary'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. Conleth & Mary'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 a place available. If 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**

1. 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:

The school shall admit each student seeking admission to classes or years other than the school's intake group except where –

- a) the year or class or unit (in the case of the ASD unit) is oversubscribed (please see section 6 above for details of the selection criteria that will be applied in the event of the number of applicants exceeding the number of places available)
- b) a parent/guardian 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.

After his/her admission to the school, the parents/guardians of these pupils will be requested to provide the school with copies of all previous school reports. These reports are essential to ensuring that the school can meet the specific educational needs of these pupils.

All other terms of this School Admission Policy will apply to those on whose behalf an application for admission is made to other than the intake year in St Conleth and Marys.

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

The school shall admit each student seeking admission to classes or years after the commencement of the school year except where –

- a) the year or class or unit (in the case of the ASD unit) is oversubscribed (please see section 6 above for details of the selection criteria that will be applied in the event of the number of applicants exceeding the number of places available)
- b) a parent/guardian 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.

After his/her admission to the school, the parents/guardians of these pupils will be requested to provide the school with copies of all previous school reports, where applicable. These reports are essential to ensuring that the school can meet the specific educational needs of these pupils.

All other terms of this School Admission Policy will apply to those on whose behalf an application for admission is made to St Conleth and Marys during the school year.

## **16 DECLARATION IN RELATION TO THE NON-CHARGING OF FEES**

The board of St. Conleth & Mary'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**

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



## 18 REVIEWS/APEALS

### Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent/guardian 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/guardian 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 ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Pat O'Mahony, Chairperson, Board of Management

Date \_\_\_\_\_