Roll No: 11135K
Principal: Mrs Emer Magee
Chairperson BoM: Mrs. Amy Kidd
Patron: Bishop Adrian Wilkinson

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Saint Mary's
Church of Ireland National School
Scoil Mhuire

St. Mary's National School

Enrolment / Admissions Policy 2026

Introduction

The Board of Management of St. Mary's National School herby sets out its Enrolment and Admission Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management and the principal will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy.

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

General School Information

St. Mary's National School,
Dunleckney Road
Bagenalstown,
Co. Carlow
R21XF96

Telephone No: 059 9721021
email: secretary@stmarysnsbagenalstown.ie

St. Mary's N.S. is a Church of Ireland school under the Patronage of the Bishop of Cashel Ferns and Ossory, belonging to the Leighlin & Dunleckney Group of Parishes.

The school follows the curricular programme prescribed by the Department of Education and Youth, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998)
Within the context and parameters of Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding and resources available, the school support the principles of:

- Inclusiveness
- Equality of access
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

The school day commences at 9.10 a.m. and finishes at 2.50 p.m. (1.50pm for Junior & Senior Infants).

Application Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1 This Admissions Policy for **St.Mary's NS** has been devised in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Equal Status legislation, the relevant sections of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, directives of the School's Patron and following consultation with the school community.

1.2 In this Policy, any reference to parents is to be taken as including reference to guardians, any reference to child is to be taken to include a child who has been adopted or fostered, any reference to siblings is to be taken as including reference to step siblings and foster siblings.

2. General Information

2.1 While recognising the rights of parents to enrol their child in a school of their choice, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine maximum school and class size capacity, in order to ensure the safety and educational needs of students.

2.2 In determining the level of admissions, the Board shall take account of Department of Youth regulations/circulars in relation to staffing, class size and pupil teacher ratios; health and safety requirements, including, for example, traffic restrictions; it shall also have regard to issues such as physical space, multi-grade classes, the presence of pupils with special educational and/or behavourial needs, the number of pupils expected to leave the school, the size of classrooms/play areas/school premises, the deployment of teachers and the resources of the school.

3. Notification of Intention to Apply Form

3.1 Those intending to apply for enrolment of a student in the school should contact the school and request a copy of the Notification of Intention to Apply Form. Submission of the Notification of Intention to Apply Form does not offer any priority whatsoever to the Intending Applicant nor does it in any way guarantee a place for him/her either for the term and year requested nor for any other term or year.

3.2 If the intention is to seek to enrol a child in less than 21 days, an Application Form should be requested and there will have to be full compliance with this Policy in terms of the application.

3.3 Those who have returned a Notification of Intention to Apply Form will be sent an Application Form in the year of proposed enrolment in the school.

St. Mary's National School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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 requested to do so by the Council.

St. Mary's National School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

4. Applications for Admissions

4.1 All applications for a place in the school shall be submitted to the School Principal on the approved Application Form. An Ethos statement and Code of Behaviour (if provided at this stage) will be furnished to each Applicant with a copy of the Application Form at the appropriate time, in advance of the Admissions Application period.

4.2 The application must be submitted during the Admissions Application period i.e. between 9.00 am on the allocated opening date and 3 pm on the allocated closing date in that given year.

4.3 The School will not accept applications in advance of 9.00 am on the allocated opening date or after 3 pm on the allocated closing date in that given year.

4.4 The strict deadline for receipt of fully completed Applications form is 3 pm on the allocated closing date.

4.5 Only those Application Forms that have been completed in full, signed, dated, accompanied by relevant supporting documentation and submitted by the closing date will be considered by the Board. In order for an application to be considered, all required accompanying documentation must be provided prior to the closing date.

4.6 An Application Form must be accompanied by

(i) A birth certificate for the student in respect to whom the application has been made

(ii) Proof of address in the form of a utility bill in the Applicant's name (or in one of the Applicant's names where there is more than one Applicant), which must be dated no later than three months prior to the closing date

(iii)Statement confirming that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion, where applicable as outlined below. The Board of Management reserve the right to request further evidence of membership of a minority religion, if needed.

4.7 It should be noted that submission of an Application Form does not confer a right to admission, nor does it guarantee a place in the school.

4.8 Submitting inaccurate information on an Application Form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void ab initio. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn, the place being reallocated and the Applicant Student being placed last on the waiting list.

4.9 Submission of the Application Form early in the Admissions Application period is not a factor in the allocation of places in the school. If an application is submitted prior to the Admissions Application Period, the application will not be considered by the Board of Management.

4.10 The Applicant Pupil must have attained his/her 4th birthday on/before 25th August of the year in which the child intends to start school.

5. Consideration of the Applications

5.1 The Board having considered the applications, will issue its decisions in writing within 21 days of the closing date.

5.2 Waiting lists for Applicant Students, only apply for the school year in respect of which the application for enrolment was made and do not carry forward to subsequent years.

5.3 Applicants who have been offered a place must inform the school, by completing and returning the admissions acceptance form within 7 calendar days of being offered a place. Failure to do so within this timeframe will result in the place being forfeited and being reallocated.

5.4 Any contact with and/or lobbying of school personnel and/or board members regarding an application for admission will automatically disqualify the applicant and a place will not be offered.

5.5 The foregoing conditions are subject to internal review from time to time and may be changed pursuant to other factors including DES/Patron requirements, changes in legislation etc.

6. Priority

6.1 St. Mary's National School is a Church of Ireland school. In the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places, the priority categories below, which are listed in order of priority, are used to determine the priority given to applications in the descending order outlined below as follows:

Priority Category 1: An Applicant Student who is a member of the Church of Ireland and who lives within the boundary of the Leighlin & Dunleckney Group of Parishes.

Priority Category 2: An Applicant Student who is a member of the Church of Ireland and who lives within the boundary of the Fenagh Union of Parishes.

Priority Category 3: An Applicant Student who is a member of a Protestant reformed church or is a member of a minority religion which has the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the school and who lives within the boundary of Dunleckney Union of Parishes, Leighlin Union of Parishes; Fenagh Union of Parishes, where such parishes have no Church of Ireland/Protestant school of their own.

Priority Category 4: An Applicant Student from inter-church families, where one parent is a member of the Church of Ireland, living within the parishes listed above, whose parents express a wish to have their child educated specifically within a Church of Ireland ethos.

Priority Category 5: An Applicant Student who is a sibling of a student previously enrolled in the school.

Priority Category 6: An Applicant Student who is a member of a church involved in the Irish Inter-Church Meeting i.e. Roman Catholic Church

Priority Category 7: All other Applicant Students of other faiths and none who comply with the terms of this policy.

In respect of Priority categories 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 above, the Applicant must provide the following documentation with the application form in order for the application to be complete, as the School must satisfy itself that the Applicant Student is a member of their stated religion and that it provides a programme of religious instruction or religious education which is of the same religious ethos as, or a similar religious ethos to, the religious ethos of the religion of the Applicant Student.

(i) a statement from the Applicant confirming that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion and that the Applicant wishes the Applicant Student to be educated in a school that provides a programme of religious instruction/education which is of the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to, the religious ethos of the minority religion of the Applicant Student.

and

(ii) evidence from the Applicant to support the statement that the Applicant Student is a member of their stated religion. This evidence will consist of:

- a letter from the relevant religious leader confirming, that the Applicant Student is a member of their stated religion or
- the signature and stamp of the relevant Church leader on the application form confirming, that the Applicant Student is a member of their stated religion.

It is to be noted that where oversubscription occurs in any one of the above priority categories, priority will be given within the priority category (and only in that priority category) to Applicant Students, who have siblings currently enrolled in the school ("Sibling Applicant Students"). Where the number of Sibling Applicant Students in such a priority category, exceeds the available number of places, the remaining places will be allocated to Sibling Applicant Students using a lottery ("names in hat" method). Where the number of Sibling Applicant Students in such priority category does not exceed the number places available, the remaining places in this category will be allocated using a lottery system ("names in hat" method).
Where the Applicant Students in a category are not successful in achieving a place, their names will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which such names were drawn in the category. Applicants will be informed of the Applicant Student's place on the waiting list as it applies in the particular priority category.

7. Refusal to Enrol

7.1 The School reserves the right to refuse enrolment where an Applicant does not comply with the terms of this Policy.
7.2 In exceptional circumstances, the school reserves the right to refuse enrolment where:

i. The Applicant Student has special needs such that, even with additional resources being made available from the DES/NCSE, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the Applicant Student with an appropriate education;

ii. The Applicant Student poses unacceptable risk(s) to other pupils, staff and/or school property.

7.3 Applicants refused under any of the above criteria will be advised of their right to appeal the Board's decision as outlined below.

8. Appeals Procedure

8.1 Applicants who are unhappy with an enrolment decision may appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to the DES on the official Section 29 Appeal Application Form which can be downloaded from www.education.ie. This appeal must be submitted to the DES within 42 days of receipt of the decision of the Board to refuse enrolment.

9. Ratification and Review

9.1 This Policy was ratified by the Board on 13th Oct. 2026 and follows guidelines issued by the Patron in respect of admissions.
9.2 This Enrolment Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Board.

Chairperson: BoM: Mrs. Amy Kidd

Signed: Amy M Kidd Date: 13 Oct. 2026

Principal: Mrs. Emer Magee

Signed: Emer Magee Date: 13/10/2026.