

# Enrolment Policy

MERCY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

### Introduction

This enrolment policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998). The Board of Management trusts that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The chairperson of the Board of Management, *Mr. Brian Kennedy, Mercy Primary School, Birr, Co. Offaly* and the Principal teacher, *Mrs. Barbara Hanamy, Mercy Primary School, Birr, Co. Offaly*, will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

Mercy Primary School operates under the Rules for National Schools, The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), enacted sections of The Education of Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004), all relevant equality legislation and Department of Education and Skills (DES) Circulars.

<b>School Name:</b>	Mercy Primary School
<b>School Roll Number:</b>	03220F
<b>School Address:</b>	Chapel Lane, Birr, Co. Offaly
<b>Telephone No.:</b>	0579120259
<b>Denominational Character:</b>	Catholic
<b>Name of Patron:</b>	Most Rev. Fintan Monaghan
<b>Total No. of Teachers:</b>	12
<b>Range of Classes Taught:</b>	Junior Infants – 6th Special class for children with Autism.
<b>Gender Orientation of School:</b>	Girls

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. School policy has regard to the resources and funding available.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 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 (1998), and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need;
- equality of access and participation in the school;
- parental choice in relation to enrolment; and
- respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

## **SECTION 2: ENROLMENT PROCEDURES**

### **Application Procedure**

Procedures for enrolment of Junior Infants for the next school year:

Early in Term 2 the local community is informed of the dates, time and venue of Enrolment days by:

- Parish newsletter
- Informing pupils already in school
- Notice in local paper
- Notices displayed in the school and strategic locations in the town
- School website

Enquiries re enrolment made before this are placed in an expression of interest book and are posted an Enrolment Application Form during enrolment period. (Appendix 1). A registration form (Appendix 2) also forms part of the enrolment procedure. This form will accompany the letter of offer that will be sent to parents/guardians of successful applicants. The completed registration form must be returned to the school within the timeline specified in the letter of offer. Failure to do so will be interpreted as a refusal of the offer to enrol.

### **Provision of Key Information by Parents/Guardians**

The school has a specific registration form. A copy of this form may be obtained by contacting the school office or downloading one from the school website – [www.mercyprimaryschool.ie](http://www.mercyprimaryschool.ie) . Registration forms must be submitted to the school by the closing date for receipt of applications, which will be stated each year on the registration form.

The address at which the applicant resides will be the address used by the school for correspondence regarding enrolment.

A Welcome Afternoon for parents/guardians enrolling Junior Infant children will be held in June. The children visit the Junior Infant classroom while Parents/Guardians are invited to an Induction Meeting in the PE room where the Principal introduces some staff members, including the Home School Community Liaison Coordinator and members of the Parent's Association. School uniform, books, Code of Behaviour etc. are to be discussed.

## Decision Making

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment at times other than the start of the school year are made by the Board of Management in accordance with school policy. The Board will notify parents of their decision within 21 days of the closing date for the receipt of applications.

The Board will have regard for relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, including physical space and the health and welfare of children.

The Board is bound by the Department of Education and Skill's *Rules for National Schools* which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years. Children applying to enroll in Mercy Primary School must have reached the age of 4 years by August 31<sup>st</sup> of the year they will commence school. Junior Infants, with the exception of those transferring from another school are encouraged to attend school from September 1st.

In the event that applications for enrolment exceeds/is expected to exceed the number of places available the following decision making process will apply.

1. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school (including stepsiblings), priority eldest;
2. Children residing in the parish, priority eldest;
3. Children of staff members, priority eldest ;
4. Random selection (independently verified).

The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind Department of Education and Skills Guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions. Other factors that may be considered are:

- Size and available space in classrooms.
- Educational needs of children of a particular age.
- Multi-grade classes.
- Presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs.
- Integration of children from the special class to Mainstream Classes
- Health & Safety Concerns regarding Staff and Children
- Department of Education & Science class size directives
- Time of school year

## Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

On enrolment of children with special needs the Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, will request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school can meet the needs specified in the report. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will request the Special Education Needs Organiser (NCSE see Circular 01/05) to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological and/or medical report. These resources may include for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other.

The school will meet with the parents/guardians of the child and with the SENO to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. Where necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held, which may include parents, principal, class teacher, learning support teacher, special class teacher, resource teacher for special needs, Special Educational Needs Organiser or psychologist, as appropriate.

## **Pupils Transferring**

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.

## **Code of Behaviour**

All offers of enrolment are subject to acceptance of the School's Code of Behaviour, a copy of which is appended to this policy.

## **SECTION 3: APPEALS**

The Board of Management of Mercy Primary School in compliance with section 19(3) of the Educational Welfare Act 2000 will make a decision in writing in respect of an application for enrolment within 21 days of the closing date for the receipt of enrolment applications and will inform the parents/guardians in writing of that decision.

Parents/guardians will be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to a refusal to enrol in the letter issued 21 days after the closing date for the receipt of applications. (Please note the address at which the applicant resides will be the address used by the school for correspondence regarding enrolment).

If the Board of Management refuses to enrol a student in the school, the parent/guardian of the student may appeal the decision at local level. The appeal must be submitted within 10 days of the date of the refusal to enrol. It must be made in writing, addressed to the Chairperson of the Board, and clearly state the grounds for the appeal. The Board of Management will respond within 10 days of the receipt of such an appeal.

If following the conclusion of the appeal procedures at school level, a parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the decision made that parent/guardian has a statutory entitlement under section 29 of the Education Act (as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, to appeal that decision to the

Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. It should be noted that such an appeal must be lodged within 42 days of the schools refusal to enrol.

Details on appealing decisions on enrolment under section 29 of the Education Act (as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007), are available on the Department of Education and Skills website at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

## **SECTION 4: POLICY APPROVAL/RATIFICATION**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Mercy Primary School on 21st January 2020

Signed: *Brian J Kennedy* Chairperson, Board of Management