



Admission Policy of Star of the Sea Primary School

**Passage West,
Cork**

Roll number: 20105C

School Patron: Bishop Fintan Gavin, Diocese of Cork and Ross

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 15th 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 Star of the Sea 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.

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

Star of the Sea Primary School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross.

“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 Star of the Sea 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 and general objectives of the school.

Our school is a Catholic School under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Cork and Ross, Bishop Fintan Gavin. The Catholic faith is informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. The school is committed to offering its pupils a Christian vision of living in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. We endeavour in all we do to promote the Catholic ethos but also we welcome children of other faiths and none and we embrace the diversity they bring to our school.

Our school ethos recognises the uniqueness and importance of all members of the school community and in partnership with pupils, parents and the wider community, is committed to developing the full potential of every child – intellectually, physically, socially, morally and emotionally in a safe, caring and nurturing environment.

Our school motto "*Tuilltear meas le dícheallacht - Effort earns respect*" was carefully chosen to affirm each child's uniqueness and acknowledge their achievements while also celebrating their successes.

The staff of Star of the Sea Primary School take great pride in fostering a welcoming, nurturing, caring and safe place for your child to grow and develop.

3. Admission Statement

Star of the Sea 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.

Star of the Sea Primary School 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 Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Star of the Sea Primary School will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its 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 requested to do so by the Council.

Star of the Sea Primary School will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4) (b).

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

Star of the Sea Primary School is a mainstream school. It does not have a Special Class or ASD Class. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are catered for by their mainstream class teacher with the support of the Special Education Team.

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.

Star of the Sea Primary School is a Catholic co-educational primary school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith and 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:

Note: The Board of Management currently operates a maximum average of 27 pupils per mainstream class (DES max class average directive). All Junior Infants must be 4 years when the school year commences. However, the school would advise entrants to Junior Infants should be 5 or as near to 5 years of age on starting school.

| Priority | Criterion |
|--|--|
| 1 | Brothers and sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past (including step-siblings resident at the same address). |
| 2 | Children living within the parish geographical boundaries. |
| 3 | Children living outside the parish boundaries. |
| 5 | If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the waiting list, which consists of all other children wishing to attend Star of the Sea Primary School. |
| 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. | |

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:

In each criterion, if the class is oversubscribed on the basis of that criterion, then places will be allocated within that criterion on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.

The criteria are listed in order of priority. In each criterion, if the class is oversubscribed on the basis of that criterion, then places will be allocated within that criterion on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated. 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. This arrangement will apply in order of criteria.

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 (other than in the case of selection criterion 1 above, where a sibling or stepsibling, resident at the same address, is already enrolled in 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 Star of the Sea Primary School 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 Star of the Sea Primary School, 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 Star of the Sea Primary School 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 Star of the Sea Primary School 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 Star of the Sea Primary School 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 will be subject to the criteria set out in Section 6.

The Board of Management of Star of the Sea School strives to enrol each pupil seeking admission subject to the criteria in Section 6. While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management is also responsible for respecting the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom.

- (a) Where the number of pupils seeking admission to classes other than the intake class is greater than the number of places being made available by the school the following considerations will apply:
- physical space and guidelines from the DES in relation to class size
 - staffing provision
 - DES maximum class average directives (currently a maximum average of 27 children). Transfer into classes in excess of 27 pupils shall be at the discretion of the BOM.

(b) In accordance with the existing exemption in the Equal Status Act where the objective is to provide an education in an environment that promotes certain religious values, which in our case are the values of the Catholic Religion and where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

(c) Where parents fail to accept the Code of Behaviour of the school (accessible on school website : www.staroftheseapw.ie)

Letters of offer are sent to parents within 21 days of receipt of completed applications. Parents secure a place for their child/children when the completed Acceptance Form (Appendix 3) is received by the school.

Pupils may transfer to the school subject to school policy, available space and in some cases the approval of the Department of Education & Science. Applications will only be considered and

treated as complete upon receipt of all fully completed application forms and supporting/requested documents.

The Educational Welfare Act, 2000 requires that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress should be communicated between schools. This will be done once the child has been registered and is attending Star of the Sea school. In doing so the Board of Management complies with Data Protection legislation.

In relation to applications for the enrolment of children from another jurisdiction, with the exception of those enrolling in Junior Infants, it is the intention of the Board of Management to seek a detailed account of the child's previous schooling (including pre-school.) This may be done through official documents and interviews and should include, where possible, class reports from the previous school including attendance. This information should be provided by parents prior to the child starting school.

If offered a place pupils are expected to have the school uniform and all books and resources needed on day of commencement. Failure to do so will result in enrolment being deferred.

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 Board of Management will not enrol a Junior Infant pupil after 30th September unless the child has attended a Junior Infant class in another school.

In accordance with the existing exemption in the Equal Status Act where the objective is to provide an education in an environment that promotes certain religious values, which in our case are the values of the Catholic Religion and where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Letters of offer are sent to parents within 21 days of receipt of completed applications. Parents secure a place for their child/children when the completed Acceptance Form is received by the school.

Pupils may transfer to the school subject to school policy, available space and in some cases the approval of the Department of Education & Science. Applications will only be considered and treated as complete upon receipt of all fully completed application forms and supporting/requested documents.

Pupils transferring to the school during the academic year will, along with their parents, be invited to meet with the Principal. Completed application forms do not necessarily mean automatic acceptance.

If offered a place pupils are expected to have the school uniform and all books and resources needed on day of commencement. Failure to do so will result in enrolment being deferred.

Star of the Sea Primary School promotes inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need. However, the school reserves the right to defer enrolment pending:

- The receipt of an assessment report(s) by a relevant professional(s)

- The provision of all appropriate resources by the SENO and the Department of Education & Skills which may be required to meet the needs/requirements specified in the psychological, medical or other relevant professional report(s)
- The school's satisfactory compliance with regard to relevant regulatory requirements in respect of any necessary additional accommodation provision or necessary modifications to existing accommodation/school grounds in order to meet the needs/requirements

It is expected that pupils transferring to Star of the Sea Primary School wait for a natural break in the school schedule before taking up a place e.g. At the beginning of a week or after a scheduled school holiday.

The Educational Welfare Act, 2000 requires that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress should be communicated between schools. This will be done once the child has been registered and is attending Star of the Sea school. In doing so the Board of Management complies with Data Protection legislation.

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

The board of Star of the Sea Primary School 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 parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has 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 will be accommodated by the school as follows:

Bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made so that the school is as inclusive as possible. While Catholic education and the ethos of the school permeates the day, children of other faiths or none, where a request is made in writing, will be excused from attendance at formal religious instruction classes. However, due to supervision constraints, such pupils must remain in the classroom. At this time children will be guided by their teacher to engage in purposeful activities. Children of other faiths or none will not be expected to attend specific Catholic liturgies. As far as possible, in consultation with parents suitable alternative arrangements will be made in order to facilitate this. It will not be possible however to provide religious instruction in other faiths.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent 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 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 drawn up in consultation with staff, parents and the Board of Management.

It was ratified by the Board of Management 22nd March 2020 and approved by the Patron on 15th September 2020. It was subsequently amended in Dec 2022.

It is accessible to view on the school website and a hard copy is available on request from the school office.

