
Enrolment Policy

The Board of Management (B.O.M.) of St. Columbanus N.S. Loughlinstown Co. Dublin. has agreed the following enrolment policy pertaining in the school as of December 2012, in accordance with provisions of the Education Act 1998.

St. Columbanus N.S is a Catholic school, under the Patronage of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin. It was established in 2005 and caters for boys and girls from Junior Infants to 6th class. Mrs. Eileen Penston is the Chairperson and the Principal is Mr. Peter McCabe. The Board of Management includes representatives of parents, teachers, the trustee and the local community. There are 12 teachers on staff, including the principal, resource teacher, learning-support teachers, and home-school liaison teacher. There are also 4.5 Special Needs Assistants, a caretaker and a secretary.

Children enrolled in the school are required to co-operate with and support the school's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with these policies in an age-appropriate way. On enrolment a copy of the Code of Behaviour is issued to all new parents and each parent is requested to sign an undertaking to uphold the School's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy. No child will be allowed to attend St. Columbanus N.S. until the undertaking has been signed.

The school operates under the Rules for National Schools and Departmental Circulars and is funded by grants and teachers resourced by the Department of Education and Science. The school is subject to The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004) and all relevant equality legislation. It follows the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Science.

St. Columbanus N.S aims to educate the children in a Christian atmosphere, to pursue excellence in all areas of the child's development, to nurture the self-esteem of each child within a safe supportive environment and to enable each child to develop their full potential.

The school curriculum followed is the Revised Curriculum for Primary Schools (1999) produced by the NCCA in conjunction with the D.E.S. This is subject to amendments by the D.E.S., in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998)

The school supports the principles of :

- [inclusivity (particularly with reference to children with disabilities or special educational needs).
- [equality of access and participation in the school.
- [respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.
- [parental rights to enrol their children in the school of their choice; this in the context of the existing school community and the rights of the pupils already enrolled.

Therefore, no child will be refused access to St. Columbanus National School for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, accent, language, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values, family or social circumstances.

In the event of the number of children seeking to be enrolled exceeding the space and staffing available, the following priority listings will apply:

1. Brothers and sisters of children in the school.
2. Catholic children who live within parish boundaries.
3. Catholic children who live outside the parish and do not have a Catholic school in their parish.
4. All children who live within the parish boundaries but are not Catholic applying for a placement are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the group from (1) to (3) have been allocated places.
5. All children who apply to the school and are not Catholics and not residents within the parish boundaries are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after groups from (1) to (4) have been allocated places.

Only children who have attained 4 years of age on or before the 30th September will qualify for enrolment for the new school year commencing on or after the 1st of September of the school year.

Application procedure

Junior Infants must be 4 years of age by September 30th in the year of entry.

Enrolment of Junior Infant pupils, during the school year, who are 4 years of age after September 1st, is dependent on readiness and availability of places. This decision is at the discretion of the Board of Management, which will be mindful of the following:

- [The number of classrooms available
- [The size of available space in each classroom
- [The educational needs of children already enrolled
- [Multigrade classes
- [DES maximum class average directives
- [Special needs Support if required

Parents wishing to enrol their children in this school should, in the first instance, make contact with the Principal. The school's enrolment policy and ethos will be explained and made available.

Assuming that there are places available in the requested classes, an Application Form may be completed at this time. Application forms may be completed and submitted at any time during the school year. If transferring from another school, it is school policy that Mr. McCabe will contact the Principal of that school, prior to the offering of a place.

Parents will be required to provide details of their child's name, age and address, religion, previous education, special educational needs and any medical needs. Birth certificate, baptismal certificate and proof of address must be submitted.

In the case of a child with specific special educational needs, the B.O.M. may request copies of medical and/or psychological reports in order to assess the school's ability to appropriately provide for the education of the child. In such cases, a meeting will be held with the child's parents and all personnel involved in the care of the child. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the needs of the child and to profile the support services required. Following this meeting and on receipt of all relevant reports, the B.O.M. will assess how the school can meet the needs identified.

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to the above, and in some cases, subject to the prior approval of the DES. As a result of change of address, children will be accepted into the school at any time depending on availability of places.

While recognising the rights of the parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled.

The completion of an application form or the placement of a child's name on a list, however early, does not confer an automatic right to a place in the school. In the event of any dispute, decisions regarding enrolment are the responsibility of the B.O.M. In this, the B.O.M. is bound by the Rules for National Schools (D.E.S.)

Enrolment of Pupils with Special Needs.

The Board of Management of the St. Columbanus N.S welcomes applications to enroll from parents/guardians of children with special needs.

In relation to applications from such children the Board of Management may request a copy of any relevant medical or psychological reports as are available. If such a report is not available it is open to the Board to request that the child be assessed prior to enrolment. The purpose of the assessment is to establish the educational needs of the child relevant to her disability/special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following the receipt of such a report the Board of Management shall assess how the St. Columbanus N.S meet the needs specified in the report. If further resources are required the Board of Management will, prior to enrolment, request the Department of Education and Science to provide the required resources. These may include any combination of the following – visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport or other services.

The school principal will meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the schools suitability and capability in meeting those needs. If necessary, a full case conference may be called which may include parents, principal, class teacher, learning support teacher, special class teacher, resource teacher, psychologist and medical personnel.

It may be necessary for the Board of Management to defer enrolment of a child pending assessment report and/or provision of resources by the Department of Education and Science to meet the needs specified in the psychological and/or medical report. Notwithstanding the availability of such resources, parents of children who are dissatisfied with level of educational provision in St. Columbanus N.S are advised to consider a special school, which is designed and resourced to specifically cater for the needs of children with special educational needs.

Appeals Procedure

Parents, who are unhappy with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. It must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal, and lodged within ten days of receiving the refusal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act on the official form provided by the Department. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of the refusal from the school to enrol.

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____