



Enrolment Policy

Introduction

The Board of Management of Queen of Angels P.S. hereby 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 or the Principal Teacher 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

Queen of Angels Primary School is a Roman Catholic school under the Patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. As a Roman Catholic school, the school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith.

At present, the teaching staff is comprised of 16 teachers and 5 Special Needs Assistants. The full range of classes is taught in the school and classes are of mixed gender. The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. The school policy has regard to the resources and funding available.

Class starts at 8.50 a.m. and finishes at 2.30 p.m. Infant Classes finish at 1.30 p.m.

Rationale

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:

- to make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the ethos, the Mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements
- to make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it, and
- to put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school

Legal Framework

Section 9 (j) of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that “A recognized school shallSubject to this Act and in particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school”.

Section 15 (2) (d) states the Board of Management shall “publish The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents’ choice are respected”.

Section 27 (1) states that “A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school” and (2) that “the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers”.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 [Section 19 (1)] requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school’s Admission Policy. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information “make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof”

The Equal Status Act, 2000 [Sections 5 & 7 (2)] prohibits discrimination on the grounds of “gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community” regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values [Section 7 (3)].

Goals

The school shall have in place appropriate channels of communication and procedures

- to inform parents about the school, its programmes, activities, and procedures
- to enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner
- to put in place criteria under which applications shall be considered
- to ensure that these criteria are informed by our ethos, our Mission Statement and current legislation
- to specify what information is required by the school at the time of application

Context, Resources, School Organisation & Curriculum

The school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society. The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parent’s choice, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of any applicant or student. The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil – teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the

Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

Queen of Angels P.S. follows the curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Section 9 & 30 of the Education Act 1998. All pupils enrolled in the school are expected to participate in all aspects of the curriculum which includes the following subjects: English, Gaeilge, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, SPHE, Visual Arts, Music, Drama, and Physical Education.

Queen of Angels P.S. provides Religious Education for Catholic pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. Non-Catholic pupils may be exempted from the religious education programme at the request of their parents. Parents must, however, accept the Catholic Ethos of the school as a condition of enrolment.

The Board of Management of Queen of Angels P.S. has formally adopted and implemented Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary School (2011), which is based on Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011). Our policy is accessible on the school website and a copy of our “Child Protection Policy” is available in the school office and in our Parents’ Room.

Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy

Roles of Board of Management

- To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementations and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.
- To decide on appeals by parents or students with respect to any decision(s) made by the Principal/Board of Management.
- To prepare (and submit to the Education Welfare Board) a statement of Strategies regarding Attendance. The Statement of Strategy will have regard to guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board and will set out the measures the Board of Management proposes to adopt
 - a) For the purposes of fostering and appreciation of learning among students attending the school and
 - b) Encouraging regular attendance at the school on the part of all students

Role of the Principal

- To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, students, parents, Board and Trustees
- To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review date
- To implement the policy and to support other teaching staff in their implementation of the policy
- To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with government policies

- To ensure, within the constraints of available resources, that alternative programmes are devised where necessary and practicable to meet the needs of students
- To appraise the policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate
- To ensure a register of all students attending the school is established and maintained
- To ensure that a record of attendance or non-attendance is maintained for each student registered at this school and, in the case of non-attendance, the reason for same
- Prior to registering a child, to provide the parents of an applicant with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and ensure that the parent confirm in writing their acceptance of the Code as an assurance that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child
- To provide, on request, to any parent of a child registered in the school, a copy of the Code of Behaviour
- Where a child is refused admission, to advise the parents of their right of appeal to the Trustees and the Department of Education setting out Title and Address of each and advising of time limits

Role of Teaching staff

- To co-operate with the implementation of this policy
- To take the needs of all students into account in the way in which they select textbooks, plan and teach their lessons and conduct assessments
- To bring concerns about Special Needs curricular matters and information to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Special Needs Teacher
- To keep parents informed through the regular Parent / Teacher Meetings and School Reports and by meeting parents from time to time as required.
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

Role of Students

- To co-operate fully with the school in the implementations of the policy
- To offer suggestions for improving the service to students with special needs

Role of Parents

- To support the policy and to co-operate fully with the school in its implementation
- To bring to the attention of the school authorities any concern they may have in relation to the school's provision for the educational needs of their child
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implantation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

Policy Considerations

The Board of Management of Queen of Angels Primary School reserves the right of admission if such admissions contravene Departmental guidelines on class size, etc.

Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender, traveller status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious/ political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances, provided the necessary supports are in place in the school.

The school will maintain a list of refused applicants for each class, their place on that list having been determined under the criteria outlined.

The Board of Management respects parental choice in relation to enrolment, provided the enrolment criteria are fulfilled.

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Queen of Angels P.S. has also a responsibility to respect 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 interest of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the BOM reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- size of / available space in classrooms
- the educational needs of children of a particular age
- multi-grade classes
- presence of children with special educational/ behavioural needs
- health & safety concerns regarding staff and children
- DES maximum class average directives
- availability of appropriate supports and resources
- time of school year

Procedures – Application and Enrolment Criteria

- Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in Queen of Angels Primary School are requested to return to the school by 30th October each year:
 - (a) a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the office or on our website www.qoa.ie) with accompanying documentation
 - (b) an original Birth / Adoption Certificate,
 - (c) PPSN number – requirement for the DES (Department of Education and Skills)
 - (d) A Baptismal Certificate if the child is baptized
 - (e) Any other relevant reports i.e. medical /psychological/speech and language reports*

***Enrolment of children with Special Educational Needs**

We ask parents to inform the school if your child has an identified special need or if there are concerns about any aspect of your child's development that might be relevant to the school. This will assist the school to ensure that suitable educational/assistive technology/teaching/care needs resources can be sought to support the child's needs.

Children with special needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to the Board of Management.

It is the policy of Queen of Angels P.S. to request an up-to-date Psychological Report and / or Medical Report etc for a child with identified special needs who is

seeking a place in this school. The purpose of assessment reports is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to his / her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required. Where the Board deems that further resources are required it will make an application (with the consent of parents) to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and/or Department of Education and Skills (DES) to seek the provision of resources to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological and / or medical report.

- The names of children for whom Enrolment Application forms and Birth/ Adoption Certificates have been returned, will be placed on a class waiting list.
- Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit a student.
- Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage

Admission to the school is, of course, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources, and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission. Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources-where the resources cannot be secured, the school reserves the unfettered right to refuse admission. It is the responsibility of parents / guardians of any child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form for the child's own welfare. In this context the school authorities will have equal regard for the welfare of all the students and their right to an education in an atmosphere that is not detrimental to their physical, emotional, moral, social or intellectual development. Failure to fully complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

- In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class/ standard exceeding the number of places available preceding or during the school year (due to the BOM being unable to provide suitable accommodation, or recruit the required teaching staff) the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment:
 - a. Brothers & Sisters (including step-siblings, resident at same address) of children already enrolled in the school – priority to the eldest.
 - b. Catholic children of the parish (including children of the Travelling Community resident in the parish).
 - c. Children of current school staff/ancillary staff - priority to oldest
 - d. Children whose fathers/mothers are past pupils of the school.
 - e. Children in care, resident in the immediate neighbourhood, e.g. foster children with child minders
 - f. Catholic children who live outside the parish and do not have a Catholic school in their parish.

- g. Children who live within the parish boundaries but who are not catholic are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the groups from (a) to (f) have been allocated places.
 - h. Children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an OS map) if the child is normally resident outside the parish/ agreed catchment area. Priority will be given to children in feeder estates.
 - i. In the event of being unable to enrol a child(ren) from categories (a) to (e), in a given class at the beginning of a year, or mid-year, such children will receive priority (in order of a, b, c, d, e,) for the subsequent school year over other children on the class waiting list.
 - j. If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List, which is compiled and ordered according to the date of the original application. 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.
- Other pupils are enrolled during the school year (if newly resident in the area). Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the Rules governing National Schools, as well as our own school's enrolment policy and local agreements with other schools and subject to recommendation from other school principals. Children will not be accepted into sixth class unless the family has moved house to the school's catchment area.
 - Children enrolled in Queen of Angels Primary School are required to co-operate with and support the School/ Board of Management's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation, & management. The BOM places Parents/ Guardians responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way. In accordance with the Department of Education's rules for National Schools, the school will follow procedures for suspension and expulsion as set out in the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) guidelines. These policies may be added to and revised from time to time. Parents who accept a place for their child in Queen of Angels P.S. will be required to sign an undertaking to uphold the school Code of Behaviour and other policies.

Please Note: Incorrect Information submitted regarding enrolment eligibility renders an application invalid. Parents of children who are enrolled on the basis of misinformation will be asked to withdraw their son/daughter from the school. Proof of residence may be investigated to determine eligibility as per above.

The completion of an application form or the placement of a child's name on a waiting list does not confer a right to a place in the school. Places are allocated according to the enrolment criteria outlined.

Procedures: Decisions and Appeals

Procedure for offers of school enrolment and acceptance of enrolment – Junior Infants

- Offers of enrolment for junior infant classes will be notified to parents in writing (to the address as per enrolment application form) within 21 school days of the end of October.
- Acceptance of a place must be confirmed in writing by parents and the requested documentation (as outlined in the offer letter) submitted to the school within the stated time frame.
- All pupils who are accepted for enrolment will be registered as per the name on their birth certificate.
- Parents of pupils who accept school places for junior infants will be invited to an Information Meeting in the school normally in March. It is important that parents attend this important meeting.
- Prospective junior infant pupils and their parents are invited to visit the school on a date in June to familiarize themselves with the classroom environment.

Enrolment of children in classes other than in Junior Infants

Children wishing to enrol into classes (senior infants – sixth class) or children seeking to transfer to Queen of Angels P.S. from other schools are enrolled subject to the Rules Governing National Schools, as well as Queen of Angels P.S. Enrolment Policy. Pupils may apply to transfer to the school, subject to school policy and subject to the availability of places in classes.

It is advised that parents who seek enrolment for child/ren or who seek to transfer a child/children from another school should apply to Queen of Angels P.S. in advance of the commencement of the school year. When a child is accepted for enrolment, Queen of Angels P.S. normally seek school reports and with parental permission will request other relevant reports etc from a pupils' previous school.

In cases where children seek to enrol or seek to transfer from another school, parents will be informed of availability of places in Queen of Angels P.S. within 21 days of application for enrolment.

Refusal to enrol in exceptional circumstances

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment in exceptional circumstances where (i) a child has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from DES/NCSE, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education (ii) in the opinion of the Board of Management a child poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff and/or school property.

Appeals Procedure

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

Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular emphasis placed upon:

- effective management placed on application process
- clarity and transparency relating to the process
- applicants informed in good time re the status of their application, particularly in the case of refusal to enrol
- positive parental feedback

Monitoring Procedures

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff at the same time. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment in December each year and regularly thereafter until enrolment is complete. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to him by the Board in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

Review Procedure

This Enrolment Policy will be reviewed annually in the light of experience.

Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Reviewed and Ratified by the Board of Management on _____.

Next review of this policy will occur during February 2018.

