

St. Philomena's

*Girls' National School
Tullamore*



Enrolment Policy

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Introduction

This enrolment policy is being 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 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.

School Name: St. Philomena's N.S.
School Address: Convent Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
Telephone No.: 057 932 1983.
Denominational Character: Roman Catholic.
Name of Patron: Bishop of Meath.

St. Philomena's N.S. is

- A DEIS Band 2 school
- An all Girls' Senior National School catering for girls from 3rd to 6th class inclusive.

Presently we have

- 6 Mainstream class Teachers
- 2 Full-Time Support Teachers
- 1 Part-Time Support Teacher based in Scoil an Chlochair, Kilbeggan
- A shared Home School Community Liaison Teacher, based in Scoil Bhríde, Tullamore

Range of Classes Taught: 3rd class 3rd/4th class 4th class 5th class 5th/6th class 6th class

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;
- respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society;
- parental choice in relation to enrolment.

St. Philomena's N.S. opens at 9.20 a.m. and closes at 3.00 p.m. each day.

Enrolment Procedures

These procedures will be subject to regular review by the Board of Management and may be revised, from time to time, by the B.O.M.

1. A notice regarding enrolment will appear in the Parish Newsletter and be displayed in the school. Letters will also be sent home with the girls in Second Class in St. Joseph's N.S., Tullamore via the Home School Liaison Teacher.
2. Parents wishing to enrol their child will be asked to visit the school on a specified date and complete an Enrolment Application Form and provide the school with an original birth certificate.
3. If the date is unsuitable, the parents will be asked to contact the school and make arrangements to collect the Enrolment Application Form.
4. The Enrolment Application Form must be returned by the stated specified date.
5. Failure to fully complete the form or lack of documentary evidence may result in refusal to admit a student.

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of St. Philomena's N.S. is responsible for protecting/maintaining the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgments, 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 Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- size of / available space in classrooms
- educational needs of children of a particular age
- presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs
- Department of Education maximum class average directives (currently 26 children)

As a general principle and in so far as practicable having regard to the school's enrolment policy, children will be enrolled on receipt of a fully completed application/enrolment form, provided that there is space available. *If the school does not receive a completed application form by the specified closing date, the Board of Management will not be able to process the application until all other applications, received on time, have been accommodated.*

The completion of an Enrolment Application Form, however early, does not confer an automatic right to a place in the school.

In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment, exceeding the number of places available, the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment. If the number of pupils in one of the categories exceeds the number of places available, a lottery will take place to determine which pupils from that category will be enrolled.

Offers are made in the following order:-

1. Applicants from Second Class in St. Joseph's N.S., Tullamore, who currently have older siblings in 3rd, 4th or 5th Class in St. Philomena's N.S.
2. All remaining applicants from Second Class in St. Joseph's N.S., Tullamore.
3. Children of all current staff members
4. All remaining applicants who do not fall into the above categories.

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

1. The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education or
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to school staff or to school property.

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

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

In relation to applications for the enrolment of girls with special needs the Board of Management will request a copy of the girls medical and/or psychological report, if available. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

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 (SENO) **S**pecial **E**ducation **N**eeds **O**rganiser (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, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other.

The school will meet with the parents of the child and with the SENO to discuss the child's needs. If necessary, a meeting with all the relevant personnel may be held.

Appeals

Parents or guardians have the right to appeal a refusal by the Board to admit their child. The Board's decision will be given in writing and the reason for the refusal will be clearly stated. The parents or guardians will be informed of their entitlement under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to appeal the decision. The school must be informed in writing by the parents/guardians of their decision to appeal.

Transfer Policy

The Board of Management will accept transfers into the school (providing the school is not already full) subject to the following:-

- a) The parents or guardians must write to the Board of Management seeking entry.
- b) They must also state reasons for leaving their present school.
- c) This letter is to be accompanied by a report from the child's teacher or principal and any other reports on the child's ability and discipline as may be required in the enrolment form.

The application cannot be considered without all the documentation as set in a) b) and c) above.

Where the Board of Management is unable to offer a place to a child seeking a transfer, the child will be put on a waiting list. The child's position on the waiting list is determined by the date of application. When a place becomes available, it will be offered in terms of the date on which the application is made, taking cognisance of a), b) and c) above.

Please note that the following still applies in relation to school transfers:

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

1. The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education or
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to school staff or to school property.

Please Note.

If a pupil is leaving the school during the school year, the parents must inform the school in writing.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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