

ENROLMENT AND ADMISSIONS POLICY

In summary, Section 15, subsection (2) of the Education Act, 1998, states that:

“A Board shall.....publish in such a manner as the Board, with the agreement of the Patron.....considers appropriate, the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students and admission to and participation by students with disabilities or other special education needs...and ensure...that ... the right of parents to send their children to the school of the parents’ choice is respected...”

The Board of Management hereby sets out its policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998, and trusts that by doing so parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Mrs. Mary Ryan and the Principal Teacher, Mrs. Loraine Butler, Ratoath Senior National School (Telephone No. 01 8254470) will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

School Name: Ratoath Senior National School, Fairyhouse Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath.

Telephone Number: (01) 8254470.

Denominational Character: Roman Catholic.

Patron: Most Rev. Thomas Deenihan, Bishop of Meath.

Total Number of Teachers: (24) 18 Mainstream Teachers and 6 Special Education Teachers.

Ratoath Senior National School is a mixed school, teaching classes from 3rd class to 6th class (boys and girls).

As in the case of all National Schools, Ratoath Senior National School depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and operates within the regulations laid down by the Department. The Board of Management wishes to emphasise that school policy must have regard to the resources and funding available.

Ratoath Senior National School follows the national curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act, 1998.

Ratoath Senior National School Charter

Ratoath Senior National School is a Roman Catholic School established with the Minister for Education and Science under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath. The school aims to promote the full harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with 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 Catholic Church and promotes the formation of pupils in the Catholic Faith.

Ratoath Senior National School Mission Statement

Ratoath Senior National School promotes Gospel values in a Christian learning community, where children can grow in knowledge and understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values.

We are fully committed to offering excellence in education by:

- Promoting the highest possible achievement for our pupils
- Encouraging children to grow within the Catholic faith
- Establishing the foundations for lifelong learning
- Welcoming input from partners to complement the skills and experience of our professional staff
- Ensuring that our school is central to the parish, reaching out to embrace the wider community
- Uniting all children, staff, parents, and Board of Management in our aim to be a leading school in the Diocese of Meath.

Our aim is that all children should leave Ratoath Senior National School with the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy, an enthusiasm for learning, a thirst for knowledge, an appreciation of their religion and the world they live in and, above all, many happy memories.

The Board of Management declares that, within the content and parameters of the 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 following principles:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational needs
- Equality of access and participation
- Parental choice in relation to the school, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school (Section 15 (d) of the Education Act, 1998)
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life of all its pupils.

The school year normally runs from 1st September – 30th June

Current Procedures for the purposes of Enrolment

1. Application Procedures

- a) Considerable pre-planning is required by the Board of Management, teachers and Department of Education and Skills so as to provide adequate accommodation and sufficient number of teachers and teaching resources. Towards assisting this essential pre-planning the following procedures shall apply.
- b) Parents who wish to enrol pupils must complete, in writing the prescribed enrolment form for EACH pupil. Copy of same attached. Further copies are available from the school.
- c) For the purpose of the School Attendance Act a child is deemed to have attained a particular age on whichever of the following days, viz., the 31st March, the 30th June, the 30th September, or the 31st December, first occurs after the anniversary of his birth on which he actually attains such age.
- d) The Board of Management will communicate generally to the school community through appropriate channels such as newsletter, parish bulletin notice, notes to children, letters, phone-

calls or other appropriate media outlining the application for enrolment procedures and deadlines for same.

2. Particular time for enrolment

Generally, the school year runs from 1st September to the following June 30th. On occasion, the new school year may begin in the last days of August. The Board of Management will communicate to the school community through appropriate channels such as newsletter, parish bulletin notice, notes to children, letters, phone-calls or other appropriate media, outlining the application for enrolment procedures and deadlines for same.

- 3.** Parents are required to complete the prescribed enrolment form as comprehensively as possible giving all the following details: Pupils name, age, and address, names and addresses of parents/guardians, contact telephone numbers, contact telephone numbers in case of emergency, details of any medical conditions which the school should be aware of, Religion, previous schools attended, if any, and reasons for transfer, if applicable, together with any other relevant information (including any such other information as may be prescribed under the Education Welfare Act 2000) and giving permission for previous schools attended to forward all reports, records, psychological reports and amendments to Ratoath Senior National School.

4. Decision-Making

- a) Decisions in relation to application for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school in accordance with school policy.
- b) As a general principle, and in so far as practicable having regard to the school's enrolment policy and the agreement between the Patron and the Department of Education and Skills children will be enrolled on application, provided that there is space available in the appropriate class.
- c) Priority will be given to children transferring from Second Class in Ratoath Junior National School – all children who have satisfactorily completed Second Class in Ratoath Junior National School are guaranteed a place in Third Class in Ratoath Senior National School.
- d) The Board shall have due regard for any relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines in relation to class size or staffing provisions. Where any given class size has reached Department of Education and Skills guideline numbers, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission.
- e) The Board shall have due regard for any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, physical space, or the health and welfare of children
- f) The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could include the following:
 - i. The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
 - ii. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to the other students, to school staff or to school property

- g) In the event that applications for enrolment exceed or are expected to exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be used by the Board of Management for enrolment. Where the number of applicants in any group exceeds the number of places available, the applications will be dealt with on a first come basis (as per the date the application for enrolment form is received in the school) or will go on a waiting list.
- Brothers and sisters of children already in Ratoath Senior National School
 - Brothers and sisters of children already in Ratoath Junior National School
 - Children of Staff Members of both Ratoath Senior National School and Ratoath Junior National School
 - Children of the parish (including the Travelling Community living in the parish) if there are vacancies in the school after the groups above have been allocated places.
 - Children who apply to the school, and are not resident within the parish boundaries are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies after the groups above have been accommodated.
 - Provision for children of ethnic minorities, refugees etc.
 - Ethos considerations as outlined in Section 7 of the Equal Status Act 2000
 - Parish Boundaries.

The Board shall have due regard for any relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines in relation to class size or staffing provisions. Where any given class size has reached DES guideline numbers, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission.

These criteria may need to be amended or added to by the Board of Management from time to time in response to prevailing circumstances.

5. Pupils transferring from Ratoath Junior National School to Ratoath Senior National School

All children who have satisfactorily completed Second Class in Ratoath Junior National School will transfer to Third class in Ratoath Senior National School subject to compliance with Ratoath Senior National School enrolment policy.

6. Pupils transferring from other schools

- a) Children transferring from other schools must have satisfactorily completed Second Class. Places will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis based on the date the application form was received at the school, subject to the above premise that all children who have satisfactorily completed Second Class in Ratoath Junior National School are guaranteed places first.
- b) Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, a place being available in the school and the approval of the Department of Education and Skills. All reports and relevant documentation from previous school (s) must be forwarded in advance of enrolment.

- c) Pupils transferring from other countries: Experience has shown that in particular cases it may take two to three weeks of assessment by the school before a suitable class level is determined. Parents are required to forward all relevant reports and documentation from the child's previous school (s) with translations if necessary.

7. Pupils transferring to another school

Once a pupil has been offered a place in Ratoath Senior National School, transfer to another school may only be carried out in accordance with N.E.W.B. procedures. Ratoath Senior National School must be informed, in writing, of the new school details, including the school address and contact numbers.

8. Enrolment of children with special needs

- 1) The Board of Management shall insist that the Department of Education and Skills provide the resources required to meet educational and training needs of the child as outlined in the relevant psychological or medical report prior to the child actually starting in the school
- 2) The Board shall request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report. Where such a report is not available, the Board shall request that the child be assessed immediately by the relevant .

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 shall assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report.

Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it shall apply towards provision of necessary resources.

These resources may include, for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following:

- Visiting Teacher Service,
- Learning Support Teacher,
- Special Needs Teacher,
- Resource Teacher for special needs,
- Special needs assistant,
- Specialised equipment or furniture,
- Transport services or other.

The school shall meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If the school or Board deem it necessary a full case conference involving all parties shall be held, which may include parents, Principal, class teacher, previous teachers from the Junior School, Learning Support teacher, special class teacher, resource teacher for special needs or educational psychologist as appropriate, together with relevant people from the board.

A child with Special Education needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have the same needs unless the nature and degree of those needs is such that to do

so would be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the child or (b) the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

If the school or Board deem it necessary, a full case conference involving all parties shall be held, which may include parents, principal teacher, class teacher, special education teacher, resource teacher for special needs, relevant professionals or representatives from the Board of Management.

It may be necessary for the Board to decide to defer enrolment of a particular child, pending:

- The receipt of an assessment report and /or
- The provision of appropriate resources by the Department of Education and Skills to meet the needs specified in the psychological and/or medical report.

9. The Board of Management will be unable to accept applications in the following circumstances

- a) Where a pupil has not satisfactorily completed Second Class in a school in Ireland or its equivalent elsewhere.
- b) Where the school is already full.
- c) Where the pupil's parents refuse to accept the characteristic spirit of the school
- d) Where the Board of Management, having interviewed the pupil, the parents and any other relevant persons and having considered all medical, psychological or other reports made available to it, comes to the conclusion that it would be unable, given its present resources, to carry out its statutory obligation to provide an appropriate education to the pupil in question.
- e) The Board of Management, in endorsing the school admissions policy, pay due regard to the Department of Education and Skills' regulations on school enrolment, particularly those contained in the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000, the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 and any subsequent relevant legislation. The Board of Management will continue to endeavour as far as is practicable and having regard to the resources available, to accommodate students with disabilities or those who have special educational needs. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse to enrol a child on the following grounds:
 - i. That to have the child as part of such a class would not be consistent with 'the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004.'
 - ii. That the presence of the child in a mainstream class would be inconsistent with 'the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.'

Appealing a decision to refuse to enrol a pupil

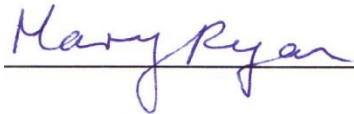
If a decision is communicated by the Board of Management to a parent indicating that the school is unable to accept a pupil, that parent can request a copy of the enrolment policy and enquire as to what section/sections of the policy justify the refusal. If unhappy with the explanation the parent can appeal the decision directly to the Board of Management. The Board of Management then considers the appeal and advises the parent of its decision.

A school, in informing a parent of its decision, should advise parents of the right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act within 42 calendar days from the date the parent was notified of the decision. The appeal will be processed by the Appeals Administration Unit of the Department of Education and Skills and the parents will be informed of its decision in due course.

Reviewing and Evaluating the Policy

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated after two years. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: Ratified 28th January 2019