

ENROLMENT AND ADMISSIONS POLICY

School Enrolment/Admission 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, Mr. Val Murríhy, Brownstown, Ratoath, Co. Meath, and the Principal Teacher, Ms. Miriam Fox, Ratoath Junior National School (Telephone No. (01) 8256639) will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

School Name: Ratoath Junior National School, Co. Meath,
Telephone No. (01) 8256639.

Denominational Character: Roman Catholic.
Under the patronage of Most Rev. Dr. Michael Smith, Bishop of Meath.

Total Number of Teachers: (26), which includes four full-time Special Education Teachers, one full-time Language Support Teacher and two full-time Resource Teachers for Special Needs

Ratoath Junior National School is a mixed school, teaching classes from Junior Infants to 2nd class. (boys and girls)

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

Ratoath Junior 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.

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 it's pupils

School opening hours:	Infants	9.20 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.
	1 st -2 nd	9.20 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.

Current Procedures for the purposes of enrolment

1. Application Procedures:

Ratoath Junior National School has expanded in recent years and continues to grow annually. This development requires considerable pre-planning by the Board of Management, Teachers and Department of Education and Science so as to provide adequate accommodation and sufficient numbers of teachers and teaching resources. Towards assisting this essential pre-planning, the following procedures shall apply.

- a) Parents who wish to enrol pupils must complete, in writing, a “Notification for Enrolment” form for EACH pupil. (Copies available from the school).

A receipt of Notification Form will be acknowledged in writing.

- b) Junior Infants: The Board of Management is bound by “the Rules for National Schools under the Department of Education and Science.” Rule 64 (enrolment of Pupils) states:

“A child may not be allowed to attend school before the fourth anniversary of his/her birth date”.

- c) The Board of Management wish to clarify that whereas these rules provide that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of four years and upwards, compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of six years under the provision of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

2. **Particular time for enrolment:** In light of 1(a) above, Parents are encouraged to complete “Notification of Enrolment” form as soon as possible, but in any event not later than Oct 31st where it is intended that the child will start school on the following September. The school year normally runs from 1st September to the following June 30th. 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.
3. **On enrolment** parents are required to complete the prescribed Enrolment Form as comprehensively as possible giving all the following details: pupil’s name, age, address, names and addresses of pupils’ parents/guardians, contact telephone number (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), P.P.S. No. together with any other relevant information including 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 Junior National School. A copy of birth Certificate must be attached to the Enrolment Form.

Decision-Making

- (a) Decisions in relation to applications 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, children will be enrolled on application, provided that there is space available at the relevant class level.
- (c) The Board shall have due regard for any relevant Department of Education and Science guidelines in relation to class size or staffing provisions.
- (d) The Board shall have due regard for any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, physical space or the health and welfare of children.
- (e) The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could include the following:
 - a. 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.
 - b. 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.

Criteria for the admission of Junior Infants

As a prerequisite for enrolment, only children who have reached the age of four years on or before 1st May prior to the September on which they are starting in Primary School for the first time will be considered for enrolment. (*see additional note at the end of criteria for admission)

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed or is expected to exceed the number of places available, the Board of Management will allocate places using the following criteria;

1. Brothers and sisters of children already in Ratoath Junior National School.
2. Brothers and sisters of children already in Ratoath Senior National School.
3. Children of Staff members of both Ratoath Junior National School and Ratoath Senior National School.

4. Catholic children of the parish (including the Travelling Community living in the parish) if there are vacancies after the above groups have been allocated places. **Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the applications will be dealt with on a first come basis as per date of receipt of "Notification of Enrolment Form"**.
5. All children who live within the parish boundaries but are not Catholics applying for a placement are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the above groups have been allocated places.
6. All children who apply to the school and are Catholics and not resident within the parish boundaries are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the above groups have been allocated places.
7. All children who apply to the school and are not Catholics and not resident within the parish boundaries are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the above groups have been allocated places.
8. Provision for children of ethnic minorities, refugees etc.
9. Ethos considerations as outlined in Section 7 of the Equal Status Act 2000

10. Parish Boundaries

*** In the event that, following the implementation of all the above criteria the school still has vacancies, the Board will allocate places for enrolment in Junior Infants beginning with those who have reached the age of 4 years on the 2nd of May prior to the September on which they are starting Primary school for the first time and will continue to allocate available places in accordance with the respective ages on 3rd, 4th, 5th May etc.**

As a rule the Department of Education & Science Guidelines on class size will be observed. Where any given class size has reached maximum DES guideline numbers, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission. The Board of Management will revise its enrolment policy from time to time and the criteria for admission may be amended in response to prevailing circumstances.

Admission Day/Dates:

Junior Infants starting primary school for the first time may only be admitted to the school on the first day of the new school year.

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

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

Pupils transferring to another school

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

Pupils transferring from other schools:

- (a) Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, available space, and in relevant cases with the approval of the Department of Education and Science. All reports and relevant documentation from previous school(s) must be forwarded in advance of enrolment.
- (b) 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 suitable class level is determined. Parents are required to forward all relevant reports and documentation from the child's previous school(s)

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs:

- (1) The Board of Management shall insist that the Department of Education and Science 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 a report is not available, the Board shall request that the child be assessed immediately.

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 provided.

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 Teaching Service, Special Education Needs Teachers, Resource Teacher for special needs, Language Support Teacher, Special Needs Assistants, specialised equipment or furniture, transport, or other services.

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.

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.

Appealing a decision to refuse to enrol a pupil

If a decision is communicated by a school Principal 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 to the Secretary General, Department of Education & Science. This appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision was notified to the parent. The appeal forms may be obtained from Post Primary Administration, Tullamore. The appeal will be processed by the Appeals Administration Unit and the parents will be informed of its decision in due course.

This policy was amended on 20th May 2010