

RATOATH JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL 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, Mr. Val Murrphy, 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 three 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.

Ratoath Junior National School Charter

Ratoath Junior 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 person 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 Junior National School Mission Statement

Ratoath Junior 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 staff, parents, and B.O.M. in our aim to be a leading school in the Diocese of Meath

Our aim is that all children should leave Ratoath Junior 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.

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”.

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.

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.

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

Current Procedures for Enrolment

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.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to complete the "Notification of Enrolment Form" as soon as possible, which is available from our website or the school office.

This is only a notification of intent to enrol and in no way offers or guarantees a place in the school. Parents are requested to register in one school only.

During the year prior to the year the child is due to start an updated Enrolment Policy will be sent to all Parents/Guardians who have already completed our Notification for Enrolment Form.

There will be communication between all schools in the Parish to establish the enrolment for each school.

The Board of Management shall each year, set the enrolment date for new pupils. The closing date for receipt of Notification of Enrolment Forms for this year is 3.00 pm on Tuesday 31st January 2012.

In the January of the year in which the child is due to start school, an Application for Enrolment will be sent out to the parents/Guardians of each child who has returned a Notification of Enrolment Form.

This form must be completed as comprehensively as possible giving all the following details: pupil's name, age, address, names and addresses of pupils' parents/guardians, contact telephone numbers (in case of emergency), details of any medical conditions of special needs 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 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. The completed form should be returned along with an original Child's Birth Certificate, Baptismal Certificate (if applicable) and a current utility bill, in order that the child MAY be considered for enrolment. This is only an application for enrolment and in no way offers or guarantees a place in the school

Places shall be allocated in the week commencing the 6th February 2012 from these applications in line with the enrolment criteria. Parents/Guardians should accept the place for their child before 28th February 2012 or the place will be forfeited and another child will be offered the place.

Decision-Making for Enrolment

- (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,
- (c) provided that there is space available at the relevant class level.

- (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 DES 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:
 - 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 and in that order. If the number of applicants under category (1) outnumbers the places available, children will be prioritised and enrolled in order of age, beginning with the eldest. The same applies to the other categories should places then be available.

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) are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the above groups have been allocated places.
5. Catholic children of the parish who have not been offered a place in St. Paul's National School or Rathbeggan National School (including the Travelling Community living in the parish) are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the above groups have been allocated places.
6. All children who live within the parish boundaries but are not Catholics 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 live within the parish boundaries but are not Catholics who have not been offered a place in St. Paul's National School or Rathbeggan National School are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the above groups have been allocated places.
8. 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.
9. All children who apply to the school and are Catholics and not resident within the parish boundaries who have not been offered a place in St. Paul's National School or Rathbeggan National School are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the above groups have been allocated places.

10. 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.
11. All children who apply to the school and are not Catholics and not resident within the parish boundaries who have not been offered a place in St Paul's National School or Rathbeggan National School are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the above groups have been allocated places.
12. Provision for children of ethnic minorities, refugees etc.
13. Ethos considerations as outlined in Section 7 of the Equal Status Act 2000
14. 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.**

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 2 to 3 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/Guardian 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.

The Board of Management will revise its enrolment policy annually and the criteria for admission may be amended in response to prevailing circumstances.

This policy was amended on 16th January 2012