



HOLY FAMILY JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL

River Valley, Swords, Co Dublin.

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ADMISSIONS POLICY 2018

The Board of Management of **Holy Family Junior National School** will revisit this admissions policy annually in advance of taking enrolment applications. The Board will update the enrolment criteria as required. This is done to provide a clear understanding of the enrolment process in our school for parents, teachers and the community at large. The Chairperson of the B.O.M. Ms Margaret O'Neill, and Principal of the school Mr Declan Power will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

Holy Family J.N.S. is a co educational Catholic Primary Junior school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. It caters for the educational needs of children from **Junior Infants to Second Class**. This school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the child; intellectual, physical, cultural, moral, and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. As a Catholic school we are concerned with the education of the whole person, therefore prominence is given to the quality of relationships alongside academic achievement.

The Holy Family J.N.S. follows the Primary School Curriculum prescribed by the D.E.S. in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of The Education Act 1998. This curriculum is implemented in accordance with the timetable recommended by D.E.S. R.S.E. and Stay Safe programmes are both implemented in the school within the S.P.H.E. curriculum.

This 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. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by a belief in God and in the life death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The prescribed Religious programme for schools in the diocese of Dublin is "**Grow In Love**". Children of other Religious beliefs are excused from this programme, but there is no facility to withdraw these children when religious instruction is taking place. The children in 2nd class are prepared for the Sacraments of Penance/Reconciliation and Eucharist.

General Information

Holy Family J.N.S. is a Co Educational Catholic Primary School in the Parish of St Finian.

At present there are **650** children enrolled in the school. Based on the number of **668(30th September 2017)** the following is the staffing allocation.

1 Administrative Principal
1 Administrative Deputy Principal
24 Class teachers

- 1 Support teacher
- 1 Full-time and 1 part-time Special Education Needs Teachers (These teachers cater for children who require Learning Support and Resource Teaching)
- 2 E.A.L i.e. English as an Additional Language.
- 8 Special Needs Assistants (4 full time, 4 part-time)
- 1 Secretary
- 1 Caretaker (part -time)

The number of staff can change in line with staffing requirements of the Department of Education and Skills, and with enrolments.

There are 2 schools on this campus, each has their own roll number and are completely separate from each other.

- 1 Holy Family J.N.S (Junior Infants - 2nd Class)
- 2 Holy Family S.N.S. (3rd Class - 6th Class)

There is, however great co-operation between the 2 schools.

The children from Holy Family J.N.S. transfer automatically to 3rd class in Holy Family S.N.S. We at Holy Family J.N.S. ensure in so far as possible that the transfer is a very smooth operation to facilitate the educational and pastoral well being of the children.

The Holy Family J.N.S. follows the curricular programme prescribed by The D.E.S. in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of The Education Act 1998.

The curriculum is being implemented in accordance with the timetable recommended by D.E.S. The R.S.E. and Stay Safe programmes are both being implemented in the school within the S.P.H.E. programme. Stay Safe is a Child Abuse Prevention Programme. Parents/Guardians can contact the principal if they have any problem with their child participating in this programme.

Within the context and parameters of the D.E.S. regulations and programmes, the school supports the principles of

- Inclusiveness** with particular reference to pupils with Special needs
- Equality** of access and participation in school life.
- Parental choice** in relation to enrolment.
- Respect for diversity** of values, beliefs tradition, language and culture.

Application Procedure for New Junior Infant Classes

Each January Parents/Guardians are invited to make an application for a place in the Junior Infant classes which will be formed for August/September of the same year. There is one intake of Junior Infants every year, this being at the commencement of the school year and all applicants must have reached their 4th birthday by 31st August.

In December/early January the parents and general community are informed that the school will be accepting applications for enrolment for New Junior Infants. This is done by note through schools, announcements at Masses, and posted on the school website and local advertising.

Details of the documents required to complete the application are also supplied, these being:

1. In the case of all children the Original Birth Certificate/Adoption Certificate (not a photocopy). All pupils who are accepted for enrolment will be registered as per the name on their birth certificate.
2. Child's PPSN (requirement from Department of Education & Skills)
3. In the case of all applicants a current gas/electricity bill (no older than 3 months) as proof of address
4. Any other relevant reports e.g., medical/psychological/speech & language reports

As Catholic children in this school are prepared for the Sacraments of First Confession & First Holy Communion we request that an original copy of their Baptismal Certificate be supplied at application.

The Principal, Secretary, Deputy Principal or other senior staff will meet parents/guardians to fill an Enrolment Application Form. This is completed by the staff member, who also checks and copies the documents. Any missing documentation is noted on the form and the applicant is informed that it must be supplied by the closing date or the application will be deemed invalid. The Parent/Guardian is then asked to check, sign and date the application confirming that all information given is true. Offers of places will be based on this evidence and be withdrawn if this information is subsequently found to be false.

For administrative reasons the school will designate specific days and times to take applications for enrolment. This will be in mid-January, which allows time to supply any missing documentation. However, valid applications for enrolment will be accepted up to the closing date on January 31st.

As this school does not treat applications for enrolment on a "first come, first served" basis, the school does not accept applications for New Junior Infants in advance of the specified application time, and all late applications will be placed at the end of the list of applicants.

All parents/guardians making an application receive a copy of the admissions policy.

All applicants will be notified with a decision within 21 days of the closing date.

Parents/guardians of children who have been offered places are invited to a parents/guardians information meeting in the school hall in February/March. This meeting is conducted by the principal of the school. Parents Association Members, B.O.M. members and staff members may also attend and address meeting if they so wish.

At this meeting the parent body are given information about the school e.g. current enrolment, number of classes, number of Junior Infant classes, numbers of children in each class, resources available to school, uniform, book lists, format of first day, numbers on waiting list, arrangements for staff meetings, Croke Park/Haddington Road/Lansdowne Road etc. To end this meeting, parents will be invited to ask questions about any area of school life that they are not familiar with. They are also informed of Parent Information Book, Code of Behaviour and Discipline, Anti-Bullying Code and Support Programme.

On a specific day in June all parents/guardians whose children have been offered and have accepted places for enrolment in the school will be invited to bring their child to the school at a specific time for the purpose of seeing their child's classroom and meeting their teacher (where possible). All parents/guardians will receive such notice in writing.

When parents/guardians attend this meeting they are issued with a copy of the PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET / ROUTINES, CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE, ANTI BULLYING CODE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME.

The children are formally enrolled in the school on the first day of the school year.

Decision Making

The decision in relation to applications for enrolment in Holy Family National School is made by the B.O.M in accordance with school policy.

In so far as possible and having regard for school policy, all children who apply will be enrolled, provided there are places for them. The B.O.M. will take account the D.E.S. guidelines on class sizes.

In coming to their decisions the B.O.M is bound by the D.E.S. Rules for National Schools which state that pupils may be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards, (i.e. child must have reached their 4th birthday by 31st August) though compulsory attendance does not apply until the child reaches their 6th birthday.

In the event of there being an excess of applicants over available places, the following are the criteria by which successful applicants are decided in Holy Family Junior National School

Category 1

Children living in the parish of St Finian* together with brothers and sisters who attend/attended Holy Family Schools and children of current staff of Holy Family Schools (**who have reached their 4th birthday on or before 31st August**).

*Parish boundaries are defined by the Catholic Archdioceses

Category 2

All other applicants resident outside the parish (**who have reached their 4th birthday on or before 31st August**).

Any special needs must be referred to at application stage. In line with the recommendations of the report of The Special Education Review Body, additional special considerations are taken into account in the case of applicants with specified special needs (see addendum with respect to pupils with special needs).

All valid applications received by the closing date will be ranked by category. Rankings within each category will be determined by date of birth. This will generate a list of all valid applications, ranked from first to last.

Applicants will now be notified of the BOM decisions. Notification will be in writing to the address provided.

The available places will be offered in writing to applicants following the order detailed above. Successful applicants are asked to complete and return an Acceptance/Non-acceptance slip by the specified date.

The remaining names now constitute a "Waiting List", ranked from first to last.

Unsuccessful applicants are informed in writing and are told where they are on the waiting list. Where the school receives confirmation of a rejected offer of a place, that place will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list as soon as possible.

Where the waiting list is not cleared earlier, it will be in operation until September 30th by which time all Junior Infants places will have been filled. At this time all information held by the school on unsuccessful

applicants will be destroyed. An unsuccessful applicant may reapply the following year should they choose to do so.

From October 1st, applications for Junior Infants will only be considered where they are Inter-School Transfers.

Late Applications

Applications for enrolment in New Junior Infants will be accepted after the closing date. These are deemed late applications, and will be considered when:

- Applicants who made a valid application by the closing date have been offered and accepted/declined a place
- Applicants on the “Waiting List” (should one exist) have been offered and accepted/declined a place

Should places remain available at this point, the late applicants will be ranked according to Categories 1 & 2 above and will be offered places in this order.

If not cleared, this list will remain current until September 30th by which time no further Junior Infant places will offered to new applicants. From October 1st, applications for Junior Infants will only be considered where they are Inter-School Transfers. At this time all information held by the school on unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed. An unsuccessful applicant may reapply the following year should they choose to do so.

Application Procedure for Inter –School Transfers

This section applies where children are already pupils attending a recognised school.

The Board of Management of the Holy Family JNS may accept pupils transferring from another school subject to space being available in the particular class in question, and subject to the Board being satisfied that the transfer is in the best interests of all concerned. The Board will seek the approval of the Department of Education and Skills where applicable.

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their children in the school of their choice, the Board is also obliged to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular the children already enrolled.

When considering applications the Board must have regard for the relevant D.E.S. guidelines in relation to class size and/or staffing provisions together with any other requirements concerning physical space and the health, safety and well being of the children. This requires balanced judgements, acting in the best interest of all children.

The Board reserves the right to refuse an application for transfer to the school, and to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind

- The available space in each classroom
- The educational needs of children of a particular age
- The educational needs of the applicant
- The presence of pupils with special educational/behavioural needs
- The question of multi-grade classes
- The prevailing Pupil-Teacher Ratio as per DES

Parents of children seeking a transfer to any class (including Junior Infants after 30th September) are expected to visit the school to complete a Transfer Application Form. The documentation required is as listed above, together with recent school reports and any assessment reports. The school may contact the child's current school to seek additional information.

Application may be made at any time during the school year.

In the event of there being an excess of accepted applicants over available places for any class, names will be placed on a list. The applicant's name may remain on this list until the school is requested to remove it, or the child is no longer a candidate for the Junior School. Applicants for each standard will be ranked according to Categories 1 & 2 above. Please note that the addition of another applicant may alter the previous ranking, as the school does not operate on a "first come, first served" basis.

When a vacancy occurs in a particular standard, and where the Board sanctions filling it, this place will be offered to the applicant who is first on the list when that vacancy occurs. The child may join the class at any point in the school year, once the application is in order and accepted by the Board.

Transfers out

Parents/Guardians are requested to inform the school when their child will be transferring to another school or leaving the country. This notification should be in writing, it should specify the name and starting date for the new school/country to which the child is moving, and the date of final attendance in the Holy Family J.N.S. This allows the school offer the vacated place as detailed above.

Parents should be aware that subsequent to the written notification, if the transfer does not take place; they will have to apply to the school for a place as detailed above.

Where there is no notification provided, the school will be informed of the child's attendance in a new school by that Principal (Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Section 20), or, the child will accrue 20 consecutive school days absences. At this point the vacated place will be offered to the next person on the waiting list.

Children enrolled in the school are required to co-operate with, and support the School/B.O.M's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curricular, organisation and management. In making application to the school, Parents/Guardians undertake to support the school's policies, and the B.O.M. expects them to ensure that their children co-operate with said policies in an age appropriate way.

School Opening Hours: School open to receive children at 8.50 am. Classes begin at 9.10 am.

Morning Break: 10.30 – 10.40 am.

Lunch 12.00 – 12.30 pm.

Dismissal: Junior/Senior Infants: 1.30 pm

First/Second Standards: 2.30 pm

The School Authorities, Principal and Staff do not accept responsibility for your children before 8.50 am or after the pupils have been dismissed at the above times.

ADDENDUM TO SCHOOL ENROLMENT POLICY WITH RESPECT TO PUPILS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

1. A clear statement of the extent of the child's special learning difficulty/physical needs to be sought from the agency dealing with the case.
2. **Up to date Psychological / Speech and language reports to be provided.** Following receipt of these reports. The B.O.M. will assess how the school will meet the needs specified in the report. Where the B.O.M. deems that further resources are required, it should prior to enrolment, request the N.C.S.E.(National Council for Special Education)/D.E.S.(Department of Education & Skills) to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological 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/specialized equipment or furniture, transport services or other.
3. If currently enrolled in another school, an up to date report to be sought.
4. An analysis of the requirement of the child's educational and physical needs and our ability to meet these needs. This may involve visiting child's current school/preschool.

Meeting with parents to discuss the case at which the above are discussed. Full consideration of the parents' wishes to be taken into account and balanced with the above. It may be necessary to convene a full case conference involving all parties which may include parents, principal, class teacher, resource teacher, visiting teacher, psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist social worker, as appropriate. As with all pupils regular reviews of progress are our policy. Where it is deemed that

- (a) a child is not benefiting from a place in Holy Family JNS i.e. his/her educational, emotional, and behavioural needs are not being met due to the lack of specialised teaching resources, funding or facilities.
- (b) the presence of the child in Holy Family JNS would cause a situation where educational needs of other children are not being fully met.
- (c) a child cannot cope or who exhibits challenging behaviour i.e. behaviour which prevents the child from accessing the curriculum or behaviour which prevents other children from accessing the curriculum or a child who is deemed to be a danger to him/herself or others, the Board of Management reserves the right to reduce the length of the school day for that child.

Then the Board of Management reserves the right, in consultation with the Parents/Guardians, through the Principal, to seek a placement in a school better able to meet the child's needs.

Decision on placement will be taken based on the child's assessed educational and special physical needs and on the ability of the school to provide for these needs while continuing to provide for the educational needs of the pupils already enrolled in the school.

The Board of Management reserves the right to modify the school day in the best interests of the child and/or the other pupils/adults in the class.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment in very exceptional circumstances.

GIFTED CHILDREN:

Holy Family J.N.S. recognises that exceptionally gifted children may be registered pupils of this school. Curriculum planning by individual teachers will ensure that the resources of the school, teaching and material, will be applied to such children to maximise their potential.

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 parents/guardians have a right to appeal a refusal by the school to enrol a child. The appeal to the Department of Education & Science must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision was notified to parents/guardians.

**Department of Education & Skills,
Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit,
Friar's Hill Road,
Mullingar,
Co Westmeath.**

This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed: _____

Ms Margaret O'Neill, (Chairperson)
Board of Management, Holy Family J.N.S.

Dated: _____