



HOLY FAMILY JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL

River Valley, Swords, Co Dublin.

Principal: Mr D Power
Deputy Principal: Ms M McNally
Chairperson: Mrs A O'Toole
Charity No: 20119300
Patron: Archbishop D Martin

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ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 8th July 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Holy Family Junior School admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Holy Family Junior National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference. In line with the Catholic ethos, the school observes Catholic holidays and festivals.

The children are prepared for the reception of the sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion in accordance with arrangements with the Archdiocese of Dublin. The children are given opportunity to participate in liturgical celebrations arranged by the school.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Holy Family Junior National School shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

The school is committed to the aims and principles of the primary school curriculum. The curriculum aims to enable each child to:

- Live a full life as a child and realise his/her full potential as a unique individual.
- Equip the child to avail of further education so that he/she may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society.
- Develop social, through living with and co-operating with others for the good of society.

This school celebrates the uniqueness of each individual and seeks to nurture the child in all dimensions of his/her life; spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, asthetic, social and physical.

The school sees itself as an integral part of the Parish of St Finian, in partnership with the parent body. Close contact is maintained between school and home. Parents and teachers support each other in supporting the pupils to realise the fullness of their potential. We value greatly our relationship with parents and the local community.

The Principal and staff aim to make the school a centre of excellence in which high professional standards are maintained and where pupils learn in a safe and happy environment.

As a learning community, the school promotes and values the notion of life-long learning for all. Teachers and all staff are encouraged and supported to develop personally and professionally. Ancillary staff are respected and highly valued for the contribution they make to the school.

We strive to respond to the needs of all our pupils. The school promotes equality of opportunity and it respects the cultural and religious values of all. Extra support is provided for children with learning difficulties, special educational needs and where English is a second language.

This school seeks to promote a warm welcoming, safe, happy, supportive, nurturing, inclusive, respectful environment for the whole school community. We aim to provide a safe, physical and emotional environment that fosters tolerance and inclusivity.

3. Admission Statement

Holy Family Junior National School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
 - (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
 - (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
 - (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
 - (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
 - (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
 - (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
 - (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- or

- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Holy Family Junior National School is a school whose objective is provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

Holy Family Junior National School does not have a special class or special unit catering for children with Special Educational Needs

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student
- c) Holy Family Junior National School is a Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school

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.

A NEW application will be required for all unsuccessful applicants should they wish to apply the following year.

Parents and general community are informed when 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.

The documents required to complete the application are listed on the Annual Admissions Notice:

A member of staff will meet parents/guardians to fill an Enrolment Application Form. The required documentation will be checked first. **The application cannot proceed unless all documentation is supplied.** 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 usually be in January of the year your child is due to commence school. However, valid applications for enrolment will be accepted up to the 2.30 pm on the date specified on the Annual Admissions Notice.

The school does not accept applications for New Junior Infants in advance of the specified application time. Applications received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be considered as “late applications” (see Section 14).

All parents/guardians making an application receive a copy of the Admissions Policy which is also available on our website.

Except in exceptional circumstances a decision regarding enrolment will be made and notified to parents within 21 days of the closing date.

Parents/guardians of children who have been offered and accepted places, are invited by the Principal to attend an information meeting.

This meeting will give information about the school, uniform, book lists, format of first days, supports available through the school, ending with a short Question & Answer session. They are also informed of Parent Information Book, Code of Behaviour and Discipline, Anti-Bullying Code and Support Programme.

Parents/guardians who have accepted places for enrolment in the school will receive a written invitation to bring their child to the school on a specific date and at a designated time, for the purpose of seeing their child’s classroom and meeting their teacher (where possible).

When parents/guardians attend this meeting they are provided with a welcome pack containing copy of the PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET / ROUTINES, CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE, ANTI BULLYING CODE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME and sign a form confirming receipt of same.

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.

Lobbying of School personnel or Board members regarding admission will disqualify an applicant.

6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

Category 1

Children living in the parish of St Finian* together with siblings/step siblings who are currently enrolled in 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)**

All valid applications received by the closing date will be ranked by category. Rankings within each category will be determined by date and time of birth. In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above eg; same date of birth/ where time of birth is not officially recorded on birth cert the allocation of place will be decided by a draw by an independent person.

Priority is given to the oldest children **within each category**. Available places are allocated to Category 1 first, in order of age, oldest children first. Any unfilled places will then be offered to Category 2, in order of age oldest children first.

Any waiting list will remain valid until the end of the school year for which the application has been made.

An unsuccessful applicant may reapply for a place in Junior Infants the following year should they choose to do so, provided they have not been enrolled in another recognised school.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7) (e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; other than in the case of siblings of a student attending or having attended the school
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school,

This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Holy Family Junior National School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see section 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

All applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice. Notification will be in writing to the postal address provided.

Where a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why, and details of their ranking on the waiting list will be included in this notification.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see section 18 below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

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. Where the applicant's parents decide not to send their child to school that particular year, the applicant's place cannot be deferred. A NEW application will be required for all unsuccessful applicants should they wish to re-apply the following year.

In accepting an offer of admission from Holy Family Junior School, you must indicate—

(i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

To enable this school make adequate provision for classes, staffing and additional support allocation parents are requested to indicate if their child has any additional care/educational needs. The school will be in contact with you to arrange a meeting with you to discuss how best to support your child in this school.

11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Holy Family Junior School where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received.
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription for In-Coming Junior Infants

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Holy Family Junior School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought, subject to the selection criteria laid out in this policy.(See Section 6).

Placement on the waiting list of this school is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission to Junior Infants received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act. These will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application. Late applicants will be notified in writing of the decision in respect of their application, except in exceptional circumstances, no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application.

An unsuccessful applicant may reapply for a place in Junior Infants the following year should they choose to do so, provided they have not been enrolled in another recognised school.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

This section applies where children are already pupils attending a recognised school. Applications may be made at any time during the school year.

The Board of Management of Holy Family Junior School may consider inter-school transfer applications 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 places
- 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/Guardians who wish transfer their child from another recognised school to Holy Family Junior School, ie Junior Infants to 2nd class must e-mail the school at transferappshfjns@gmail.com. In this e-mail they must give the child's name, date of birth, address, current school and class, and full contact details for a parent/guardian.

Parents/Guardians will be invited to visit the school to complete a Transfer Application Form. The documentation required is as listed on the Annual Admissions Notice. The school may contact the child's current school to seek additional information.

Where the application is for Junior Infants, the child's name will be added to the end of any existing waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application ie treated as a Late Application

Where there is an excess of valid applications over available places for applicants for Senior Infants to 2nd Class, names will be placed on a list. Applicants for these standards will be ranked according to Categories 1 & 2 (See Section 6)above. Please note the addition of another applicant may alter the ranking. 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.

Any waiting list will remain valid until the end of the school year for which the application has been made. An unsuccessful applicant may reapply for a place in the appropriate Standard the following year should they choose to do so.

Lobbying of School personnel or Board members regarding admission will disqualify an applicant.

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.

16. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The board of Holy Family Junior School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

This should not be confused with the charges associated with the yearly booklists. Parents are expected to purchase certain books/workbooks from bookshops. A nominal amount is requested towards the purchase of Art/Craft materials, photocopying, printing, school produced writing copies/other copies, hardback homework diaries (1st & 2nd Classes), Book Rental Scheme and 24 hour pupil personal accident insurance.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

We are a Catholic school with a Catholic ethos. Where the parents of a child request that the pupil attend the school without attending religious instruction, a written request should be made to make an appointment to meet with the Principal of the school.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

Data Protection

The school is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1988 and 2003. Personal data supplied on the Enrolment Form will be used for the purpose of student enrolment, registration, administration, child welfare and to fulfil any other legal obligations. While the information provided will generally be treated as confidential to the school, from time to time it may be necessary for Holy Family JNS to exchange personal data on a confidential basis with other bodies including the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Social Protection, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the National Educational Welfare Board.

Contact details will also be used to notify parents of school events and activities. The school relies on parents to provide accurate and complete information and to update the school in relation to any change in the information provided.

It is a condition of enrolment that relevant pupil information is uploaded onto the Department of Education & Skills Pupil Online Data Base (POD) when the pupil is enrolled. Further information on www.education.ie

In the case of partnership breakdown/separation the Board requests that any dispute should not involve the school. Any legal custody information should be notified to the principal's office.

Implementation, Review & Communication

This Policy was ratified by the Board on 30th June 2020 and approved by the Patron on 8th July 2020.

This Policy is available to view on the School's website or a copy can be accessed from the School office.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed: _____

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

Dated: _____