



**Letterkenny
Educate Together
National School**
ag fás le chéile - ag foghlaim le chéile

ENROLMENT POLICY

TITLE

Enrolment Policy

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The school is a National School, and as such operates in accordance with the rules for National Schools and other regulations as may be laid down by the Department of Education and Science from time to time. It is also **dependent on such grants and teacher resources as are provided by the Department.** All school policies must have regard to the resources and funding provided.

This policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. The Board of Management hopes to clarify the enrolment/admissions procedure by the publication of this policy and procedures document. Clarification of any aspect of the document may be sought from the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the school Principal at the school address and phone number.

The Board of Management makes decisions in relation to enrolment. In accordance with enrolment guidelines proposed by our Patron, Educate Together, the school operates a strict **"first come, first served" enrolment policy**. There is no sibling preference given. As the school does not have a defined catchment area, parents are required to place their children's names on a "pre-enrolment list".

The school operates within the context and parameters of all of the above and having regard to the following:

- The regulations and programmes set down by DES and in particular those regulations relating to class size, staffing and provision and accommodation
- The rights of the Patron body as set down in the Education Act
- The funding and resources available
- The health and safety of pupils and staff
- The physical space in the school

While recognizing the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class subject to these parameters. The Board is conscious of the capacity of our available accommodation. This policy is mindful of future space requirements and restrictions and the need to provide for manageable incremental growth without overcrowding. This is vital in the creation of a positive learning environment.

RATIONALE

To ensure fairness and transparency of procedures used to pre-enrol and enrol children in Letterkenny Educate Together National School.

RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL

Child-centered: We operate a first come first serve policy and each child has an equal right to a place under the terms of this policy. Placements take into consideration the needs of individual children and the needs of the class group.

Equality Based: Parents/guardians are not required to identify a denominational affiliation or ethical background during the enrolment process. All children are welcome at our school.

Co-educational: There is no preference given in the enrolment procedure on the basis of gender,

Democratic: We operate a first come first served enrolment policy. We give a copy of this policy to parents/guardians on request when enrolling children.

AIMS

- To ensure fairness in operating the first come first served policy.
- To appropriately address the enrolments of children with special educational needs.
- To ensure anyone interested in enrolling a child in this school is aware of how our enrolment policy operates.
- To ensure the continued wellbeing of currently enrolled pupils.

GUIDELINES (CONTENT OF POLICY)

- 1) Parents/guardians can obtain enrolment forms by contacting the school by phone, letter or e-mail.
- 2) Enrolments are accepted any time after the child's birth.
- 3) Documents required by the school for the enrolment of a child:
 - Completed registration forms.
 - Long form of birth certificate.
 - Child's PPS number.
- 4) Upon the receipt of completed applications, each enrolment form is endorsed with a unique, sequential enrolment number. Parents/guardians are issued with a receipt indicating this number.
- 5) If more than one form is received on the same day, they are ordered by postdate on the envelope. If the post date is the same, the applications are opened in the order in which they are received. Hand delivered applications will be dated at time of receipt.
- 6) Each child will be placed on the list according to the enrolment number. If parents have twins/triplets, the children will be put on the list one after the other in alphabetical order using first names.
- 7) Junior Infants are entitled to start in the school if they are 4 by 31st May of that year. Parents can choose to enrol their child for that year or for the following year when he/she would be 5. Children must be under 6 by September 1st to enrol in Junior Infants.
- 8) Two lists will be kept for each year: a Junior Infant list and a non-Junior Infant list. Children will be ranked in enrolment number order on these lists.
- 9) No guarantees of places are given or implied by enrolment.

- 10) Children will be offered places strictly following the ranking of the enrolment numbers on the enrolment list. Places will be allocated on a 'first come - first served' basis.
- 11) While the school operates a policy of continuous enrolment, an open day will be held in the school each year in February during which enrolments will be taken. This open day will be advertised in the local media.
- 12) The first round of offers for places in the Junior Infant class/es will take place in January each year.
- 13) Parents must respond in writing to confirm acceptance of an offered place for their child for the coming school year. This written confirmation must be received within 14 days of that offer being made. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in their child's place on the enrolment list being forfeited.
- 14) Second round offers will not be made until the closing date for acceptance of earlier offers has passed.
- 15) Offers of places made after the first day of school commences each year, must respond within 5 days. In this case, and in order to facilitate the process, parents/guardians will be given a standard letter to assist them in making this response at the time of application if they so wish.
- 16) Parents enrolling Junior Infants may defer the child's place for one year, providing the child will be under 6 by 1st September of the year that he/she starts school. Junior Infants' actual enrolment may be deferred for a maximum of one year. Placement order in following year's enrolment is in accordance with original enrolment number (i.e. as if they had originally enrolled for the deferred year). This does not guarantee an offer of a place.
- 17) Junior Infants, who have taken up an offer in the school, and defer within 10 days of the start of the school year, will be treated as if the deferral had taken place before actual enrolment.

- 18) Pupils other than Junior Infants cannot defer a place which has been offered to them. However, if the parent/guardian wants to put them on the list for the next year for a different class, they will be issued with a new enrolment number and put on the appropriate class waiting list for the following year.
- 19) If a non-Junior Infant is not offered a place in the year of initial application, parents/guardians will be offered the option to put their child's name on the enrolment list for the next available year, retaining the child's original enrolment number. This offer will be made on September 30th of the year of initial application. Parents/guardians must respond to this offer in writing within 14 days of that offer being made: otherwise their child's place on the enrolment list will be forfeited.
- 20) If a child does not attend school in a new school year by 10th September their place will be forfeited. Written requests may be sent in from parent(s) before the 10th giving reasons for non-attendance, to request an exception to the policy. It is at the Board of Management discretion whether to hold the place for the child due to exceptional circumstances. Parents can place the child on the waiting list for a future date after forfeiting a place as a result of missing 10th September deadline. They will receive a new enrolment number.
- 21) If a child does not attend school for 20 consecutive school days their name will be removed from the roll books. However, the NEWB will be informed of non-attendance as per Attendance Policy. If a child's name has been removed from the roll the parent can place the child on the waiting list for a future date. They will receive a new enrolment number.
- 22) If a child leaves during the school year, his/her place may be back-filled from the waiting list. The place will be offered to the next person on the list for the same class.
- 23) It is the sole responsibility of the parent/s, guardian/s to inform the Secretary of the school promptly of any change of address, telephone number or other relevant circumstances.

- 24) New Junior Infants will be invited into the classroom at the end of May/ or in early June for an informal session to familiarize themselves with their new environment.
- 25) In accordance with the Education Act 1998, parents whose child has been refused admission to any National School may appeal the decision as laid down under section 29 of the Act. The procedures for such an appeal are laid out in Department of Education and Science circular 22/02 and available on the Department of Education and Science website www.education.ie

Transfer enrolments

The Education Welfare Act (2000) contains specific provisions in relation to transfer of pupils, including the requirement that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress is communicated between schools.

Transfer of pupils from another school without change of address may only occur during the 1st and 2nd school terms on a 'first-come, first- served' basis, subject to the availability of a place in the required class.

Pupils seeking transfer from another school due to change of address will be allocated places on a 'first-come, first-served' basis subject to the following conditions.

- The DES requirements for the transfer of a pupil from one primary school to another are fully complied with.
- A recent school report.
- Recent assessments where relevant.
- The school is satisfied with the reasons for transfer. Information will be requested from the student's current/former school in this regard.
- There being a vacancy in the class/standard in which the student would be most appropriately placed.
- Information/documentation on any special educational or behavioural needs is provided by the child's parents/guardians at the time of application for a place in school.

- The school is satisfied that the move is in the best interest of the student and the other students in the class.

In the case of school transfers, letters confirming attendance at Letterkenny Educate Together National School will only be sent to other schools directly and upon request, following notification from receiving school.

Special Educational Needs enrolments:

- Should it become apparent either before or after pre-enrolling a child that the child has special educational and/or health needs, it is of the utmost importance that these are discussed with the school Principal as soon as the needs become apparent.
- The Principal will then meet with the parent to discuss the child's special educational needs. The Principal will also make contact with the relevant professionals who have been dealing with the child and the Special Educational Needs Officer.
- The parents will be requested by the Principal to supply copies of any reports (medical/psychological) available. If the child has not been assessed, an immediate assessment may be requested.
- The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the special educational needs of the child and to liaise with the Special Educational Needs Officer with a view to accessing whatever supports may be deemed necessary to address those needs at school level.
- Occasionally it may be necessary for the Board of Management 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 Science to meet the needs specified in the psychological and/or medical report.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- All places are offered on a first come first served basis.
- The enrolment of each child with special educational needs is given particular attention.
- A summary of the policy is given to each parent/guardian who pre-enrolls a child/children.
- The needs of currently enrolled pupils are considered and protected.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

As the school does not have a defined catchment area, parents/guardians are required to place their children's names on a pre-enrolment/waiting list.

Parents/guardians are advised to check with the school by January 17th if they believe that their child should have received an offer of a place and no such offer has been received.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

May 2012

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management no less frequently than every three years and will be amended where deemed necessary and appropriate.

RATIFICATION & COMMUNICATION

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management May 2012. A summary document will be distributed after this date to all currently enrolled and at time of enrolment to parents of pre-enrolled children.