

Bennekerry N.S. Enrolment Policy

Introduction:

The Board of Management of Bennekerry N.S. hereby sets out its enrolment policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 Section 15(2) and the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018. The Board trusts that by doing so parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

This policy was initially drafted by a sub-committee of the Board of Management. Following consultation with staff and representatives of the Parents' Association, the Board of Management reviewed and amended the draft document and ratified the school admissions policy on the 19th of March 2013. It was further amended in November 2018 to comply the Education (admissions to Schools) Act 2018 and these changes were also ratified by the Board of Management.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy

Aims:

The purpose of the policy is

- To clarify the Board of Management's position in relation to the enrolment of children in the school.
- To put in place criteria under which applications will be considered.
- To ensure that these criteria are in accordance with our ethos, our mission statement and current legislation.
- To promote transparency in the allocation of places where demand for such places exceeds the number of places available.

General Information:

Name of School: Bennekerry N.S.

Address of School: Bennekerry, Co. Carlow

Eircode: R93 D535

Roll No: 17501Q

Phone No: 059 9143495

email: bennekerry@gmail.com

Denomination: Catholic Primary School

Patron: Bishop Denis Nulty (Bennekerry N.S. is under Catholic Patronage)

Number of Teachers: 23, including Principal

16 Mainstream Teachers

6 Special Education Teachers

Type of School: Bennekerry N.S. is a vertical co-educational primary school catering for children from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

School Hours 9.20am – 3 pm

Bennekerry N.S. is a state aided Catholic Primary School which depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Science. The school operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time by the Department of Education & Science. It is the policy of the Board of Management that all state grants from the Department of Education & Science shall be used only for the purpose for which they are provided. The school policy has regard at all times to the resources and funding available. The Board of Management also acknowledges the financial support made by parents through fundraising activities organised by the Parents' Association.

Schedule for Catholic Schools

Bennekerry N.S. as a Roman Catholic School (established in connection with the Minister for Education) aims at promoting the full and 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.

Mission Statement

Bennekerry National School is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

While B.N.S is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions.

Bennekerry National School will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes.

Bennekerry National School will encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contact and through their involvement in the Bennekerry N.S. Parents' Association.

Bennekerry National School will endeavor to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.

Bennekerry National School will promote gender equality amongst the teachers and pupils.

Déanfaimid iarracht Gaeilge a labhairt.

In keeping with the Primary School Curriculum (1999) the school offers a broad-based curriculum. It is the policy of the Board of Management that the school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education & Science, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

(1)

Within the context and parameters of the Department of Education & Science 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 principles of:-

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need;
- Providing equality of access and participation for all pupils which does not discriminate against them because of gender, race, disability, traveller status, special needs or ethnic origin;
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment;
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, social circumstances, languages and ways of life in society.

THE PROCEDURES FOR ENROLMENT

Application Procedure:

Stage 1

Parents who wish to enrol pupils in **Junior Infants** should indicate their intention of enrolling their child / children in the school. This can happen at any time between the birth of the child and the month of October in the year prior to when the child expects to start school. The school will furnish the parents with the **Notification of Intention to Enrol Form**. These completed forms will be stored on file in the school.

Stage Two

Parents who have registered their intention to enrol will receive an **Enrolment Application Form** in October of the relevant year, along with details of where to access the school's Code of Behaviour, Enrolment Policy other relevant school policies. The Board also communicates enrolment details to the wider school community. This will be announced through the appropriate channels i.e. school newsletter and/or text message to parents, parish newsletter and local paper.

Receipt of the application form does not guarantee a place in the school for the pupil. The closing date for receipt of fully completed applications is normally the 31st of October annually (or the second school day after the mid-term break if the last day of October falls during this break). All of the information sought in the application form must be furnished accurately. Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit a pupil.

A letter from the Principal will inform parents of the outcome of their application for enrolment of their child.

Provision of key information by parents:

The Board will require the following information when children are being enrolled.

- Pupil's name, address, Eircode, date of birth, gender and PPS number
- Copy of birth certificate
- Proof of address
- Nationality/language spoken at home
- Religious denomination
- Baptismal certificate (if applicable)
- Parents' names, occupations, contact telephone numbers (provision of information re. occupation is optional)
- Number of children and place of the pupil in the family
- Names of other siblings currently attending the school
- Details of any medical conditions, assessments and reports from outside agencies e.g. medical, speech and language, occupational therapy, psychological reports etc.
- Name and telephone number of family GP
- Details of contact person other than parents/guardians in case of emergencies
- Permission or non-permission from parents/guardians for use of photographs or digital images of the pupil for display in the school, school-based projects, inclusion on our website or in local newspapers.
- Previous schools/pre-schools attended, if any, and reasons for transfer, if applicable
- Any other relevant information as may be prescribed under the Education Welfare Act 2000.

(2)

Decision Making

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with school policy.

The Board will notify parents of their decision within 21 days of receiving such information. In the case of Junior Infants, the decision will be communicated within 21 days of the closing date of applications.

The Board will have regard for relevant Department of Education and Science guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, including physical space and the health and welfare of children.

The Board is bound by the Department of Education and Science's *Rules for National Schools* which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years.

Enrolment Criteria

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will apply to prioritise children for enrolment.

- **Brothers and sisters of current pupils** (including step-siblings)
- **Children living within the parish of Bennekerry**
- **Children of current staff**
- **Brothers and sisters of past pupils**
- **Children living outside the parish of Bennekerry**

In the event that there are more applicants within any of the above categories than there are available places, allocation of the remaining places will be based on date of birth, with priority being given to the older applicants. Admission for Junior Infants normally takes place on the first day of the academic year. Principals in the Carlow catchment area consult on matters pertaining to enrolment.

Pupils transferring from other primary schools:

Parents of children seeking to enrol their child in any class from senior infants to sixth class are requested to fill out an Enrolment Application Form. Where possible, the application form should be submitted to the school by the 31st of January prior to the school year in which enrolment is sought. The Board will communicate its decision to the parents within 21 days of the application.

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, available space, and either with approval of the Department of Education & Science **or** when a transfer is made because of a change of the ordinary residence of the child. When there are more applications than available places available, the selection criteria outlined above applies. Enrolments from children attending other primary schools in the locality will not normally be accepted during term time.

Enrolment of Pupils with Special Needs:

In relation to enrolment of pupils with special needs, the application for enrolment should be accompanied by **all** relevant information pertaining to the pupil e.g.

- psychological report
- report from speech and language/occupational therapist where appropriate.
- medical history/report in so far as it relates to the special needs of the child.
- indication of the existence of other reports, assessments of information where a child has been seen by another agency or professional e.g. social worker, neurologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, psychologist etc.,

Where such reports are not available the Board will 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 required.

Where further resources are required, the Board requests the Department of Education & Science through the SENO to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological, medical or other report.

The Principal will meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs. If necessary, a full case conference involving all parties should be held – parents, principal, psychologist, speech therapist, OT, class teacher, special education teacher.

Exceptional Circumstances:

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

- 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 or
- In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.

Appeals:

Parents/guardians of applicants who do not secure a place in Bennekerry N.S. may appeal the decision to the Board of Management in accordance with Section 29(d) of the Education Act 1998. A further appeal may be made if necessary, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. Such appeals must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was communicated to the parents/guardians. The principal and the Chairperson of the BoM will have the responsibility of preparing the response to the Appeals Committee.

Responsibilities of parents / pupils:

Pupils who are enrolled in Bennekerry N.S. School are required to co-operate with and support the school's Code of Behaviour and all other policies on curriculum, organisation, procedures and practices. The Board of Management places the responsibility on parents/guardians for ensuring that their child/children will co-operate with the said policies in an age appropriate way.

Ratification:

This Admissions/Enrolment Policy was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on the 19th of March 2013. Amendments made in line with the Education (Admissions Bill) 2018 were ratified on 27th November 2018. The policy will be reviewed again within 5 years or when new guidelines are issued by the Department of Education and Skills.

The Enrolment Policy will be available to parents of children wishing to enrol their children in Bennekerry N.S. through our website. Hard copies will also be available from the school office on request.

Chairperson Board of Management : Edmund Burke _____

Principal: Tonia Cleary _____

Date: _____