

Enrolment and Admission Policy

The Board of Management of Gortskehy N.S. hereby sets out its Enrolment and Admission Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal Teacher will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

At present, the teaching staff of Gortskehy N.S. is comprised of 2 class Teachers, 1 shared Learning Resource Teacher and 1 shared Learning Support Teacher. The full range of classes is taught in the school and classes are of mixed gender. Archbishop Michael Neary is the Patron of the school.

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. The school Policy has regard to the resources and funding available. Classes start at 8.50 a.m. and finishes at 2.30 p.m. Infant Classes finish at 1.30 p.m.

RATIONALE

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the Ethos, the mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements;
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it and,
- To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Section 9 (j) of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that "A recognised school shallSubject to this Act and in particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school".

Section 15 (2) (d) states the Board of Management shall "publish The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice are respected".

Section 27 (1) states that "A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school" and (2) that "the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers".

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 [Section 19 (1)] requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school's Admission Policy. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information "make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof"

The Equal Status Act, 2000 [Sections 5 & 7 (2)] prohibits discrimination on the grounds of “gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community” regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values [Section 7 (3)].

GOALS

The school shall have in place appropriate channels of communication and procedures

- To inform parents about the school, its programmes, activities, and procedures;
- To enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner;
- To put in place criteria under which applications shall be considered;
- To ensure that these criteria are informed by our Ethos, our Mission Statement & current legislation;
- To specify what information is required by the school at the time of application.

CONTEXT, RESOURCES, SCHOOL ORGANISATION & CURRICULUM

The school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society. The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parent’s choice, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of any applicant or student. It will make every effort to secure those resources – where the resources cannot be secured the school may refuse admission. The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil – teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING THIS POLICY

Role of the Board of Management:

- To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed;
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementations and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate;
- To decide on appeals by parents or students with respect to any decision(s) made by the Principal/Board;
- For the purposes of fostering and appreciation of learning among students attending the school and,
- Encouraging regular attendance at the school on the part of all students.

Role of the Principal:

- To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, students, parents and Board of Management;
- To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review date;
- To implement the policy and to support other teaching staff in their implementation of the policy;
- To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with government policies;
- To ensure, within the constraints of available resources, that alternative programmes are devised where necessary and practicable to meet the needs of students;
- To appraise the policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate;
- To ensure a register of all students attending the school is established and maintained;
- To ensure that a record of attendance or non-attendance is maintained for each student registered at this school and, in the case of non-attendance, the reason for same;
- Prior to registering a child, to provide the parents of an applicant with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and ensure that the parent confirm in writing their acceptance of the Code and an assurance that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child;
- To provide, on request, to any parent of a child registered in the school with a copy of the Code of Behaviour.
- Where a child is refused admission, to advise the parents of their right of appeal to the Board of Management and the Department of Education setting out Title and Address of each and advising of time limits.

Role of Teaching staff:

- To co-operate with the implementation of this policy;
- To take the needs of all students into account in the way in which they select textbooks, plan and teach their lessons and conduct assessments;
- To bring concerns about Special Needs curricular matters and information to the attention of the Principal;
- To keep parents informed through the regular Parent /Teacher meetings and School Reports and by meeting parents from time to time as required;
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

Role of Students:

- To co-operate fully with the school in the implementation of the policy;
- To offer suggestions for improving the service to students with special needs.

Role of Parents

- To support the policy and to co-operate fully with the school in its implementation;
- To bring to the attention of the school authorities any concern they may have in relation to the school's provision for the educational needs of their child;
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate;

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The Board of Management of Gortskehy National School reserves the right of admission if such admissions contravene Departmental guidelines on class size, etc. The school will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, special education needs, disability, traveller status, refugee status, political or religious beliefs, family or social circumstances, provided the necessary supports are in place in the school.

The Board of Management respects parental choice in relation to enrolment, provided the enrolment criteria are fulfilled. The Board of Management of Gortskehy National School, in its Policy of Admissions/Enrolment, respects the rights of the existing school community, neighbouring schools and the children already enrolled. Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class, bearing in mind:

- Integration of children from Autistic Unit to Mainstream Classes;
- Health & Safety Concerns regarding Staff and Children;
- Available classroom space;
- Multi-grade classes;
- Educational needs of the children;
- Presence of children with special needs;
- Department of Education & Science class size directives;
- Availability of appropriate Supports and Resources;
- Catchment area served;
- Time of school year.

PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION/ENROLMENT/APPEALS

Admission to the school is, of course, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources, and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission.

Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources-where the resources cannot be secured, the school reserves the unfettered right to refuse admission. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians of any child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form for the child's own welfare.

In this context the school authorities will have equal regard for the welfare of all the students and their right to an education in an atmosphere that is not detrimental to their physical, emotional, moral, social or intellectual development. Failure to fully complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

JUNIOR INFANT ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

Parents seeking to enrol their child in Gortskehy NS must provide the following documents:

1. A completed Enrolment Application Form (available at gortskehy.com or from the school).
2. A copy of Birth/Baptismal/Adoption Certificate.

There is an Annual Open Day for prospective parents held in Spring and new Junior Infants spend one informal period in school at the end of June to familiarise themselves with their new environment.

We are bound by the DES Rules for National Schools which states that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of FOUR years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of six years. Children applying to enroll in Gortskehy N.S. must have reached the age of 4 years by 31 August of the year they will commence school.

Because a child is entitled to enrol in Junior Infants any time between their fourth and sixth birthday, there's a potential two-year age gap between pupils. This can result in significant differences in development, motor and social skills and all-round maturity. Children who have just turned four before commencing school may not be as physically, emotionally or linguistically advanced, or as advanced as regards independence, play, gross or fine motor skills as children a year older and the rate at which they progress may be very different.

Therefore, the Board of Management strongly recommends that children be 4 years old on March 31st in the enrolment year.

TRANSFER OF PUPILS FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL AND ENROLMENT FOR CHILDREN OF CLASSES OTHER THAN JUNIOR

In case of transferrals to our school the guidelines of the Department of Education & Skills apply.

- Parents may transfer their child as a result of change of residence at anytime during the school year subject to the school's enrolment policy and available space. Otherwise the final date for enrolment in the current school year is September 30th.
- In accordance with the Education Welfare Act 1998, information concerning a child's attendance and educational progress must be communicated between schools in cases of transfer.
- Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the Rules governing National Schools, as well as our own school's enrolment policy and local agreements with other schools regarding the catchment area served.
- Application forms are available at gortskehy.com or from the school.
- The behaviour record of a student in their previous school shall be considered.
- The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall be considered.
- All children enrolled are expected to comply with and support the school's Code of Behaviour, as well as the school's designated policies on Curriculum, Organisation and Management.

EVALUATION

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular emphasis placed upon:

- Effective management placed on application process;
- Clarity and transparency relating to the process;
- Applicants informed in good time re the status of their application, particularly in the case of refusal to enrol;
- Positive Parental feedback.

MONITORING PROCEDURES

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff at the same time. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to him by the Board in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

REVIEW PROCEDURE

The policy will be reviewed regularly by the full staff and Board of Management in the light of experience. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Should a child be refused enrolment the principal will co-operate with the parents/guardians in the event of an appeal. Parents/guardians may appeal the refusal to the Board of Management or the Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education and Skills. The Board of Management will prepare a response to the Appeals Committee if, or when, an appeal is initiated.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____