

## **Admission Policy of Bray School Project National School**

**Killarney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow**

**Roll number: 19754J**

**School Patron: 'The Bray School Project' Association**

### **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 updated to bring it into line with recent legislation and approved by the school patron on 17<sup>th</sup> September 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 the Bray School Project National School's 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.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request.

### **2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

#### **School Aims & Ethos:**

Bray School Project N.S. was established in 1981, as part of the emerging Educate Together movement, with the aim to provide a democratically run school that is child-centred, co-educational and multi-denominational.

Bray School Project N.S. fully supports and embraces the four key principles of the Educate Together Charter:

**Equality-based:** All children have equal access to the school. Children of all social and cultural groups, and of all religious and non-religious backgrounds, are equally respected.

**Co-educational:** All children in the school are encouraged to fulfil their potential and explore their full range of abilities and opportunities, irrespective of gender.

**Child-centred:** The school promotes a child-centred approach to the curriculum in which the teacher guides and facilitates the child's learning through both formal and informal methods, while encouraging the child to be an active participant. Each child's individual needs are considered and the child is encouraged to learn at an appropriate pace.

**Democratically run:** The school embraces active participation by parents/guardians in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers. Input from parents, teachers, children and supporters is sought in order to enable the highest level of partnership.

The values underpinning the management structure and curriculum of Educate Together schools are those of human rights, equality and democracy. The rights of children and teachers from religious, atheist, humanist, non-religious and other backgrounds are equally respected and no one world-view is taught as truth.

More information on Educate Together schools is available on the website [www.educatetogether.ie](http://www.educatetogether.ie)

The patron of the school, 'The Bray School Project Association' is responsible for safeguarding the ethos of the school. The association is a registered charity and is limited by guarantee. Its members are drawn from within the school as well as from the wider community. It operates through an Executive Committee elected at its Annual General Meeting.

Anyone who upholds the ethos and aims of the school is welcome to join the association, including prospective parents/guardians.

### **Ethical Education Curriculum:**

The Bray School Project National School's commitment to Educate Together's Charter means that all members of the school community, whatever their social, cultural or belief background, work together in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. Students follow an Ethical Education Curriculum, learning about morality and spirituality; equality and justice; belief systems and an ethical approach to the environment. It teaches students about different belief systems as well as atheism, agnosticism and humanism, without promoting any one worldview over another. Our equality-based ethos informs all policies and practices in the daily life of the school. In exercising this policy making and decision-making responsibilities, the school's Manager/Board of Management upholds the characteristic spirit of the school.

The school provides for equality of access in line with the Educate Together Charter and offers places to siblings enrolled in the school at the same time in the first instance.

Bray School Project N.S. respects the choice of families who wish their child to attend religious instruction classes. The school facilitates interested parents/guardians to organise and run classes outside of school hours.

### **3. Admission Statement**

This policy has been formulated to assist parents/guardians to make an informed decision in relation to enrolment of a child in the school, and to comply with legislation and DES circulars.

The school values the principles of transparency, inclusion and equality for all children in regarding access to and participation in the school.

Bray School Project National School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) The sex or 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.

Decisions on applications for mainstream classes are made by the Board of Management, in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in this document.

Where the school receives more applications than there are places available for the Junior infants class the Board of Management will apply the Oversubscription Procedures outlined below.

Bray School Project National School is a school which has established classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provide an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to those classes a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

#### **4. Categories of Special/Additional Educational Needs catered for in the special class**

Bray School Project National School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established two classes to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

#### **5. Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 8](#) 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  
[https://www.brayschoolproject.ie/uploads/1/2/8/1/12815029/code\\_of\\_behaviour\\_\\_september2020\\_.pdf](https://www.brayschoolproject.ie/uploads/1/2/8/1/12815029/code_of_behaviour__september2020_.pdf)
- c) Where a student is less than 4 years of age on the 1 September of the school year concerned,
- d) The special classes attached to the Bray School Project National School provide an education exclusively for students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders and the school may refuse admission to those classes, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in those classes.

#### **6. 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; other than in relation to admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned;
- (d) the occupation (including the children of staff), 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 siblings of students who are enrolled in the school at the same time,
- (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.

## 7. Oversubscription

### **A) Junior Infants**

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 for Junior Infants. Students must reach 4 years of age on or before the 30th April of the year the school year concerned:

Eligible and complete applications will be sorted into one of the following categories:

**Category 1:** Children who have a sibling enrolled in the school (at the time of applying and when the applicant starts school); AND who are four years of age on or before the 31st December prior to commencing Junior Infants.

**Category 2:** All other children who are four years of age on or before the 31st December prior to commencing Junior Infants.

**Category 3:** Children who have a sibling enrolled in the school (at the time of applying and when the applicant starts school); AND who are four years of age on or before the 30th April prior to commencing Junior Infants.

**Category 4:** All other children who are four years of age on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> April prior to commencing Junior Infants.

Note: 'Sibling' includes step/fostered brothers or sisters.

Places will be offered firstly to those in Category 1. If the number of applicants in Category 1 exceeds the number of places available in the class, places will be offered on the basis of a random selection process, as described below.

In the event that there are still places available in the class after all children in Category 1 have been offered a place, places will also be offered to those in Category 2. Again, if the number of applicants in Category 2 exceeds the number of places available in the class, places will be offered on the basis of a random selection process, as described below.

Places will continue to be offered in this way, through categories 3 and 4, with random selection in the case of oversubscription within each category.

### **Random Selection Process**

This will be carried out in a transparent manner in the presence of an independent Commissioner for Oaths or a member of An Garda Síochána, the school Principal and another member of the Board of Management. Applicants will be allocated a unique number and offers will be made in accordance with this number, lowest first.

Twins, or other multiple applications for the same class, will be treated as one. Therefore, the same number will apply to each child.

### **B) Classes for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders:**

If a special class is oversubscribed the school will apply the following selection criteria to students. These will be applied in the order listed below to applications received within the timeline as set out in the school's annual admission notice for the special class. The child must have a recommendation for the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

The school will maintain a waiting list of complete and eligible applications.

If a place is made available, the Enrolment Advisory Board will consider and assess applicants, in the following order:

- i. Children who are already enrolled in the school and who have been given a diagnosis and recommendation, to move into a class for children with the ASD.
- ii. Children who have a sibling enrolled in the school (at the time of applying and when the applicant starts school).
- iii. Other children.

Note: 'Sibling' includes step/fostered brothers or sisters.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), places will be offered or added to a waiting list by way of a lottery of completed applications.

### **C) Other year groups – Senior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class**

The annual admission process will give priority to siblings. If the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below. It will be applied to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice for other year groups. Students must be moving to the next year group if the application is for September or to the same year if applying to move during the school year:

**Priority Category 1:** Applicant students who are siblings of children and enrolled in the school at the same time.

Note: 'Sibling' includes step/fostered brothers or sisters.

**Priority Category 2:** All other applicants.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), places will be offered or added to a waiting list by way of a lottery of completed applications.

## **8. Late Applications**

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice for Junior Infants, a special class or to other year groups will be considered and decided upon in date order of when they were received in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

## **9. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription**

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available in Junior Infants, a special class or other year groups, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to the Bray School Project National 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.

Placement on the waiting list of the Bray School Project National 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 see [section 7](#) above. Late applications will be added to the list in date order, see [section 8](#) above.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

Waiting lists will expire at the end of each school year.

## **10. Admissions of students after the commencement of the school year**

If a place is available after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, the place will be offered to the next place on the waiting list if there is one or to the next application.

## **11. Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to Bray School Project National School will be based on the following:

- a. Our school's admission policy,
- b. The school's annual admission notice (where applicable).
- c. 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.

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

## **12. Notifying applicants of decisions**

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the relevant annual admissions notice but no later than three weeks after the annual admissions process or for late applications, three weeks after the school receives an application.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year or class concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see [section 17](#) below for further details).

## **13. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from Bray School Project National 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.

#### **14. 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 the Bray School Project National 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 13](#) above.

#### **15. 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 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,

- (v) 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).

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

The board of Bray School Project National School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (how so ever 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.

## **17. Reviews / Appeals**

### **Review of decisions by the board of Management**

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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.

## **18. Data Protection**

The school acknowledges its obligations as a data controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 - 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Information obtained for the purposes of allocating places in the school to students will only be used and disclosed in a manner which is compatible with this purpose. Only such personal data as are relevant and necessary for the performance of this function will be retained. The school undertakes to ensure that such information is processed fairly, that it is kept safe, secure, accurate, complete, and up to date. Individuals have the right to have any inaccurate information rectified or erased. All data submitted as part of the admissions process will be destroyed within twelve months of the end of the school year the application is for (as opposed to the receipt of the application). A copy of all personal data obtained and kept as part of the admissions process will be made available to the subject of such data on receipt of a written request to the chairperson of the board of management.

## **Ratification & Review**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 10th May, 2016, and approved by the patron, 'The Bray School Project Association' at its Annual General Meeting on 25th May, 2016. It was updated to bring it into line with recent legislation and approved by the patron on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

The policy comes into effect from the date of notification to the school community (including parents/guardians of all current applicants).

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the policy and reserves the right to alter it, subject to its statutory obligations and obligations to its patron.

The policy will be reviewed at least every two years and/or should relevant regulations be prescribed by the Department of Education & Skills.

Should the policy be altered, the school community will be notified through the school website and internal communications. All parents/guardians of current applicants will be advised of the new policy and any changes in procedures through e-mail communications.