



Bray School Project National School

Admissions & Enrolment Policy

May 2016

(v. 2018)

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Information on the School

School Details:

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| Name: | Bray School Project National School |
| Address: | Killarney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow |
| Telephone: | (01) 286 4242 |
| Website: | www.brayschoolproject.ie |
| Email: | office@brayschoolproject.ie |
| Roll Number: | 19754J |
| Principal: | Carol Lanigan |
| School Day: | Junior & Senior Infants: 9.00 am – 1.40 pm 1 st – 6 th Class: 9.00 am – 2.40 pm |

General Information:

Bray School Project National School is a state-funded primary school, under the patronage of 'The Bray School Project' association, and is also a founder member of Educate Together.

The school follows the curriculum and timetables prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). The Board of Management is responsible for operating the school in accordance with the Rules for National Schools.

The school is dependent on the funding and grants provided by the DES, with regard to classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources, financial resources and the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of any applicant or student.

Our school is **co-educational** (girls and boys attend the same classes) and **multi-denominational** (we welcome children of all faiths & none). There is one class for each mainstream level (Junior Infants to 6th Class), with on average thirty children per class. There are also two classes which cater for children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), with up to six children in each class.

Prospective parents/guardians are welcome to meet the Principal and visit the school. There is a welcome and information meeting for new parents in May/June of the year of entry.

Classes for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders:

Bray School Project N.S. caters for up to twelve children of primary school age (up to the age of 13) with a diagnosis of ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder). There are two dedicated classes located side by side. These classes facilitate optimum inclusion as part of the school community, with access to mainstream activities as appropriate. The school aims to offer a positive and meaningful educational experience, which allows the children to develop their full learning potential in an environment of clarity, predictability and calm.

A range of teaching methodologies are used to address the needs of children with ASD, in accordance with the guidelines and approaches recommended by the DES. The school also receives support from the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) and the Health Service Executive (HSE).

After a period of time observing, assessing and interacting with the children, Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) are developed in consultation with parents and relevant professionals. These plans highlight priority learning needs and are reviewed as necessary.

In accordance with the school's Inclusion Policy, the participation of children from these classes in mainstream classes is encouraged, depending on the needs and skills of each child. The transition to post-primary school is carefully managed and supported.

The classes for children have their own requirements and procedures in terms of admissions and enrolment, and these are outlined separately.

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-based¹: 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

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.

¹ Previously referred to as 'Multi-denominational' and changed at the Educate Together 2015 AGM.

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

Ethical Education Curriculum:

Bray School Project N.S. teaches a subject called 'Belief Systems, Spirituality & Ethical Education' (B.S.S.E.), at every class level in place of religious instruction. This is based on the 'Learn Together' ethical education curriculum developed by Educate Together.

The curriculum helps all children, whatever their family's beliefs or philosophical stance, to develop morally and spiritually; to develop critical awareness and understanding of ethical decision-making; and to learn about religious and other belief systems. The four main strands are:

1. Moral & Spiritual:

The general aim of the strand is to help develop in children a critical knowledge, understanding and awareness of right and wrong and a heightened awareness of social, ethical and moral standards through reflecting on the meaning and purposes of life. The strand should encourage and develop the individual on the journey to inner discovery and empower the child to make informed moral decisions.

2. Equality & Justice:

The general aim of this strand is to develop in children a critical knowledge, understanding and awareness of issues relating to human rights, equality, culture and diversity, social justice and social inclusiveness and to empower them to make a difference.

3. Belief Systems:

The general aim of this strand is to develop in children a critical knowledge, understanding and awareness of the teachings of religious and non-theistic belief systems and how these systems relate to our shared human experience. The emphasis will be placed on an exploration of the infinite variety and richness of humankind through nurturing a respect for a person's right to hold and practice individual belief systems and through creating spaces where values can be articulated and critically examined.

4. Ethics & the Environment:

The aim of this strand is to develop in children a knowledge, appreciation and respect for their environment and to empower them to take an active role in its stewardship.

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 on the school premises outside of school hours.

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.

Bray School Project N.S. values the principles of transparency, inclusion and equality for all children in regarding access to and participation in the school. The school will not discriminate in its admission of a child on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community or having special educational needs - in respect of the child or the applicant family.

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

Applications for children with ASD are firstly considered and assessed by the Enrolment Advisory Board - which consists of the school Principal, Chairperson of the Board of Management, a member of the teaching staff and any other professionals deemed necessary e.g. Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Special Education Needs Organiser. The Enrolment Advisory Board will make recommendations to the Board of Management with regards to the school's capability of meeting the child's needs. The final decision lies with the Board of Management.

In determining class size of all classes, the school takes into account several factors, including: DES regulations; resources available; optimum pupil/staff ratios; physical space; the educational quality and welfare of all children; the health, safety and general welfare of children and staff; the presence of children with Special Educational Needs; and the participation of children with ASD in mainstream activities and classes.

Bray School Project N.S. is the only multi-denominational school in the Bray area. The school receives many more applications than there are places available for the Junior Infants class every year. It is not uncommon to receive over two hundred applications for an eventual thirty places. In these cases, the Board of Management will apply the Oversubscription Procedures outlined below. The school acknowledges and regrets that not all who wish to enrol in the school will currently be able to do so.

No fees or contributions can be made as part of the enrolment process.

Eligibility for Enrolment

- Under the Education Act 1998, a child may not be allowed to attend or be enrolled in a primary school before the 4th anniversary of his/her birth. Compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years.
- In Bray School Project N.S., **all children must be four years of age on or before 30th April of the year of enrolment.**
- **A child may enrol in Junior Infants at the beginning of the school year only.**
- Enrolment in classes from **Senior Infants to 6th Class**, and for **children with ASD**, should preferably occur at the beginning of the school year. In exceptional circumstances, a child may be permitted to enrol after the start of the school year, if a place becomes available.
- In order to enrol in the **classes for children with ASD**:

- A child must have a medical/psychiatric diagnosis of Autism (the DSM-IV and/or ICD10 criteria) AND a recommendation from the diagnostician for a placement in a class for children with ASD. This diagnosis and recommendation must arise from a professionally recognised clinical/psychological assessment carried out within the preceding 2 years.
- The school must have within the school staffing complement - and in the support services available - the resources necessary to meet the identified needs of the child.
- The educational provision for children already attending the classes for children with ASD must not be detrimentally affected by the specialised intervention required for any new child.

Oversubscription Procedures

In the case where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, the school will offer places based on the policy and procedures below:

Junior Infants Class:

Categories/Order of Priority

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 30th April prior to commencing Junior Infants.

Note: 'Sibling' includes step/half/fostered/adopted 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.

Waiting List

Once the number of offers reaches the number of places available, remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the number allocated by the random selection process. Parents/guardians will be informed of their child's position on the list.

If a place subsequently becomes available, it will be offered to the next on the list. Places can become available right up to the start of school at the end August/start of September. The class must be finalised by 30th September of each year as the school must submit enrolment details to the DES.

Senior Infants – 6th Class:

For each school year and class, the school will maintain a waiting list of complete and eligible applications, in order of time and date of application.

If a place is made available, an offer will be made to the earliest applicant, for the following September.

Classes for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders:

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:

1. 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.
2. Children who have a sibling enrolled in the school (at the time of applying and when the applicant starts school).
3. Other children.

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

In case of oversubscription within each category, applicants will be assessed and considered in order of time and date of application.

Offers are made after The Enrolment Advisory Board gives its recommendations to the Board of Management and if the Board of Management decides the school can meet the needs of the child.

Application Procedures

General:

- The Board of Management of Bray School Project N.S. advises parents/guardians to familiarise themselves with the school ethos and with the details of this policy before applying. More information on the school, its ethos, structure and policies is available on the website.
- Applications must be made using the relevant and current Online Application Form available on the school website.
- An automatic e-mail will confirm when an online Application Form has been received by the school.
- If you need to amend/update details on the Application Form, please contact the school, rather than submitting another form.
- A separate Application Form must be used for each child. Multiple applications (e.g. twins) must be indicated in the space provided on the form.
- The submission (or receipt by the school) of an Application Form does not constitute enrolment or guarantee an offer of a place.
- Incomplete applications cannot be considered (i.e. Parts 1 & 2 must be completed). An application will be deemed incomplete if the correct Application Form for the class/year is not used or if the required information / documentation is not provided. Please contact the school if you have difficulty accessing or completing an Application Form.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to promptly inform the school of any changes of address, telephone number, email address or other relevant information.
- **Disclosure:** It is expected that, in line with the ethos of the school, all applications are made honestly and fully, with all of the information relevant to the enrolment of a child in the school. Failure to disclose information on application, at registration or immediately on receipt where the information is obtained after that date may render the application or offer void. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment where false/inaccurate information is provided at any stage in the process.

Applications for Junior Infants:

- **Applications for enrolment in the Junior Infants class can only be made during the Enrolment Period in the month of October of the previous year.**

For example, applications for enrolment in the Junior Infants class for the 2019-20 school year, must be made during the Enrolment Period in October 2018.

- The Enrolment Period will be at least three weeks long during the month of October. Exact opening and closing dates will be clearly stated on the school website in **September** of each year.
- In order to apply, the relevant **Junior Infants Application Form** must be completed **online**. This will be made available on the school website (Under 'Enrolment') for the duration of the Enrolment Period.
- **Applications MUST be submitted on or before the Enrolment Period Closing Date.**
- Late or incomplete applications will **NOT** be considered.
- Please ensure e-mail/postal address details are always current, as these will be used for communications by the school.
- In mid-November, the first round of offers are made, in accordance with the policy considerations, Admission Statement, Eligibility for Enrolment and Oversubscription Procedures outlined in this document.
- All applicants will receive a response within 21 days of the Closing Date:
 - Successful applicants will receive an e-mail offering a place for the following September.
 - Applicants placed on the waiting list will receive an e-mail confirming their child's position on the list, as determined by the random selection process outlined above.
- Any place that becomes available subsequent to the first round of offers, will be offered to the next on the waiting list. This process will begin in January.
- Places can become available right up to the start of school, at the end August/start of September each year. The class must be finalised by 30th September of each year to submit school enrolment details to the DES.
- Offers will be made by e-mail and will be accompanied by a **Registration Form**.
- See procedures for accepting a place below.

Applications for Senior Infants – 6th Class:

- Applications for enrolment in classes from Senior Infants to 6th Class may be made at **any time of year except during the month of October**. Enrolment should preferably be at the beginning of the school year.
- In order to apply, the **Senior Infants-6th Class Application Form** must be completed **online**. This is available on the school website under 'Enrolment'.
- If a place is not available, the school will advise parents/guardians in writing of the applicant's position on the relevant waiting list.

- Every October, the school will up-date the waiting lists for each class. Parents/guardians will be contacted by e-mail and asked to confirm if they wish for their child's name to be moved to the waiting list for the next class. (For example, from the 1st Class waiting list to the 2nd Class waiting list).
- Parents/guardians must **confirm** which list they would like their child's name to be on, within **14 days**. Otherwise, the child's name will be removed from any waiting list.
- Offers will be made by the Board of Management, in accordance with the policy considerations, Admission Statement, Eligibility for Enrolment and Oversubscription Procedures outlined in this document.
- Offers will be made by e-mail and will be accompanied by a **Registration Form**. See procedures for accepting a place below.

Applications for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders:

- Applications for the classes for children with ASD can be made at **any time of year except during the month of October**. Enrolment should preferably be at the beginning of the school year.
- In order to apply, the **Classes for children with ASD Application Form** must be completed **online**. This is available on the school website under 'Enrolment'.
- Applications must be supported by delivering the **required documentation** to the school, **by hand or by registered post**, as described in the section on Eligibility for Enrolment, within **one week** of completing the online form.
- If a vacancy arises, The Enrolment Advisory Board will begin their consideration of applicants in accordance with the policy considerations, Admission Statement, Eligibility for Enrolment and Oversubscription Procedures outlined in this document.
- The Enrolment Advisory Board may request to meet with the applicant and their parents/guardians.
- The Enrolment Advisory Board will give their recommendations to the Board of Management.
- Parents/guardians will be notified in writing if the school cannot meet the required needs of a child or if a child does not meet the criteria for placement in the classes for children with ASD.
- Offers will be made by email and will be accompanied by a **Registration Form**. See procedures for accepting a place below.

Accepting a Place

- Parents/Guardians are required to **accept an offer** of a place by completing the **Registration Form** and returning it to the school within **14 days** from the date of the offer for first round offers or within three days for subsequent offers.
- **An original Birth Certificate MUST be included with the acceptance**. This will be copied by the school and returned.

- **Failure to respond** within **14 days** from the date of the offer for first round offers, or within **three days** for subsequent offers, will result in the place being **forfeited**.
- The **Registration Form** requests the following information:
 - Date of Birth (verified by the inclusion of an original Birth Certificate)
 - Gender
 - Contact details
 - Details of any special education / health needs or any relevant information which may affect school life (see Enrolment of Children with Special Education/Health Needs below)
 - Personal Public Service number (PPSN)
 - Previous National School (if applicable)
 - Two voluntary questions, used solely for the purpose of inclusion in the DES Primary Online Database: 1. Religion (if applicable) and 2. Ethnic/Cultural Background

Further information is available at:

www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Primary-Online-Database-POD-/POD-Information-for-Parents.pdf

- Bray School Project N.S. endeavours to provide the highest standards of care for its pupils. In order to achieve this objective successfully, it is vital that the school be informed of any relevant situation regarding health, bereavement, domestic circumstances etc. Any such information should be shared with the Principal and shall be treated in the strictest confidence.
- By accepting a place in Bray School Project N.S., parents/guardians and children **agree to abide by the school's Code of Behaviour** and other policies on curriculum, organisation and management, as provided on the school website. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children co-operate with these policies in an age-appropriate way.
- By accepting a place in Bray School Project N.S. parents/guardians and children also **agree to accept and support the school's Patron, the Ethos, the Educate Together Charter and the Ethical Education Curriculum (BSSE)**, as outlined in this document and on the school website.
- Once a complete Registration Form with relevant documentation has been received by the school, an e-mail confirming the child has been enrolled will be sent.
- Offers cannot be deferred to the next year. Eligible children may apply for the next year, following the same procedures.
- **For the benefit of families on waiting lists, parents/guardians who accept a place for their child but later decide not to take it up, are requested to inform the school (in writing or by-email) at the earliest possible opportunity.** This will allow the school to offer the place to the next waiting applicant.
- The school may occasionally contact parents/guardians of children on a waiting list, to confirm their interest in remaining on the list.

Enrolment of Children with Special Educational/Health Needs

Bray School Project welcomes children with Special Educational and/or Health needs and they will not be advantaged or disadvantaged over other children, in terms of the priority afforded their application.

In order to assist the school to establish the educational/physical needs of the child, and to profile the support services required, the school requests that the parent/guardian:

1. Inform the school of any special educational/health needs as soon as an offer of a place is accepted OR as soon as a relevant assessment report is subsequently received.
(For example, a Medical; Psychological; Speech & Language; Occupational Therapist; and/or any other relevant report).
2. Forward copies of any relevant assessment reports to the school.
3. Request that a child be assessed immediately by the relevant service, if such a report is not available.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure reports are available to the school. The school can provide information on the relevant bodies who can be contacted for these assessments.

On receipt of a relevant report, the Board of Management will begin to assess how the school can meet the needs specified by the report. In order to discuss the child's needs and to establish the school's appropriateness to meet those needs, the Principal will meet with the parents/guardians. The Principal may, with the permission of the parent/guardian, also contact the relevant professionals who have been dealing with the child to further determine the needs of the child.

If the Board of Management considers that additional resources are necessary, it will make a request to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) through the school's Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENO), prior to enrolment.

The needs of a child may be met through a combination of resources including: Learning Support/Resource Teachers; Individual Education Plans (IEPs); and/or support from Special Needs Assistants (SNAs).

Right of Refusal/Appeal

If the needs of any child are such that, even with additional resources available from the DES and/or the Department of Health, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment.

The Board of Management also reserves the right to refuse enrolment, where the level of specialised intervention required for a new child would detrimentally affect the educational provision being given to the other children in a class.

Parents/Guardians who are dissatisfied with a decision on enrolment, may appeal in writing to the Board of Management.

Parents/guardians also have the right to appeal a refusal to enrol decision under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Details of appeal procedures are available on the DES website www.education.ie

Legal Framework

The Bray School Project N.S. Enrolment Policy is set out and applied within the context and parameters of the current legal framework and with the directive of the school patron.

Relevant legislation includes: the Education Act (1998), the Equal Status Acts (2000) and other equality legislation, the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) and the Education (Welfare) Act (2000).

Data Protection

The school acknowledges its obligations as a data controller under the Data Protection Acts (1988 and 2003) and GDPR (2018). Information obtained for the purposes of allocating places in the school to applicant children 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 application for enrolment process will be destroyed within twelve months of the deadline for receipt of Application Forms. 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.

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.

Contacts

If you have any queries in relation to this policy, please contact the Board of Management in writing.

Please refer all enrolment related queries to the School Secretary/Enrolment Officer:

E-mail: office@brayschoolproject.ie

Telephone: (01) 286 4242