School Enrolment Policy

Welcome to St. Paul's National School. St. Paul's is a Catholic School, which was founded in 2005. It operates under the auspices of the Department of Education and Skills and under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Meath. The school currently has a teaching staff of 36, including an administrative Principal, an administrative Deputy Principal and 8 learning support / resource teachers. We also have nine special needs assistants.

The school follows the curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills.

The parents and guardians of all pupils at St. Paul's, by accepting places in the school, are deemed to accept the code of behaviour and ethos of the school on behalf of their children as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. These policies may be amended and revised from time to time and are available, on request, from the office.

Within the context and parameters of the Department's regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out by 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 disability or other special educational needs
- Equality of access and participation
- Parental choice in relation to the school, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life

Current procedures for enrolment

The Board of Management hereby sets out its policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998, and trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.
The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Mrs. Maeve Gallagher, and the Principal, Ms. Morag McGowan, St. Paul's National School (Telephone number (01) 8257246) will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

Parents who wish to have their child enrolled in St. Paul's **must first register their child with the school**. Parents are requested to register in one school only. There will be communication at this point between all the schools in the parish to establish the enrolment for each school. **In the January of the year in which the child is due to start, an application for enrolment will be sent out to the parents of each child who has been registered**. This must be completed and **returned**, with the child's original Birth Certificate and Baptismal Certificate (if applicable) and a recent utility bill, in order that the child **may** be considered for enrolment. **This is only an application for enrolment and in no way offers or guarantees a place in the school.**

The Board of Management shall, each year, set the enrolment date for new pupils, **the closing date for receipt of applications for enrolment, this year, is 3.00pm on Friday 27th of January 2017. Enrolment forms must be signed by both guardians, if possible.** Places shall be allocated in the week beginning the 6th of February, from among these applicants, using the following criteria.

As a prerequisite for enrolment, only children who have reached the age of four years on or before the 1st April, prior to the September on which they are starting school, will be considered for enrolment.

Criteria for the admission of Junior Infants

In the event of applications for enrolment exceeding, or being expected to exceed, the number of places available the Board of Management will allocate places using the following criteria and in that order. If the number of applicants under category (1) outnumbers the places available, children will be prioritised and enrolled in order of age, beginning with the eldest. The same applies to the other categories should places then be available.

1. Brothers and sisters of children already in St. Paul's National School, or brothers and sisters of past pupils of the school.
2. Children of Staff members.
3. All Catholic children within the Parish boundary.
4. All children who live within the Parish boundary but are not Catholics.
5. All children who are Catholics and not resident within the Parish boundary.
6. All children, who apply to the school, who are not Catholics and not resident within the Parish boundary.

As a rule the Department of Education & Skills Guidelines on class size will be observed. Where any given class size has reached DES guideline numbers, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission. The Board of Management will revise its enrolment policy annually and the criteria for admission may be amended in response to prevailing circumstances.

Children who are currently enrolled in Junior Infants in another school will not be enrolled to start in Junior Infants in St. Paul's.

Enrolment of pupils transferring from another school

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, available space, and in relevant cases with the approval of the Department of Education and Skills. All reports and relevant documentation from previous school must be forwarded in advance of enrolment.

Enrolment of pupils transferring from other countries

As with pupils transferring from other schools, pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, available space, and in relevant cases with the approval of the Department of Education and Skills. In the case of children who are transferring from other countries however, experience has shown that in particular cases it may take 2 to 3 weeks of assessment by the school before suitable class level is determined. Parents are required to forward all relevant reports and documentation from the child's previous school.

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

(1) The Board of Management shall insist that the Department of Education and Skills provide the resources required to meet the educational and learning needs of the child as outlined in the relevant psychological or medical report prior to the child actually starting in the school.

(2) The Board shall require a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report. Where a report is not available, the Board shall require that the parents have the child 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 provided. Following receipt of the report, the Board shall assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report.

Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it shall apply for provision of necessary resources. These resources may include, for example, access to, or the provision of, any or all of the following: Resource Teacher for special needs, Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport, and / or other services.

The school shall meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs.

Exceptional Circumstances

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional circumstances, for example where

a. a child has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education, or

b. in the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to school staff, school property, other pupils or their education.

Appealing a decision to refuse to enrol a pupil

If a decision is communicated, by the school Principal, to a parent indicating that the school is unable to accept a pupil, that parent can request a copy of the enrolment policy and enquire as to what section/sections of the policy justify the refusal. If unhappy with the explanation the parent can appeal the decision directly to the Board of Management within two weeks of that decision being communicated to the parent(s).

The Board of Management then considers the appeal and advises the parent of its decision.

The school, in informing a parent of its decision, should advise parents of the right to appeal to the Secretary General, Department of Education & Skills. This appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board was notified to the parent. The appeal forms may be had from Post Primary Administration, Tullamore or on www.education.ie. The appeal will be processed by the Appeals' Administration Unit and the parents will be informed of its decision in due course.

Pupils transferring to another school

Once a pupil has been offered a place in St. Paul's National School, transfer to another school may only be affected in accordance with N.E.W.B. procedures. St. Paul's N.S. must be informed, in writing, of the new school details, including the school address and contact numbers.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 4th October 2016.