

Enrolment Policy

Coosan National School

The Board of Management (BoM) of Coosan National School sets out below its Enrolment Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998.

Coosan National School generally admits girls and boys in Junior Infants. Coosan National School depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and it operates where feasible, within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. All our school policies must have regard to the funding and resources made available to the school and must consider at all times the health and safety of all pupils. Taking into consideration the health and safety of the pupils and staff and the allocation of 16 mainstream teachers to the school by the DES: The Board of Management deems the school full when it has 432 pupils (16 mainstream teachers x 28 children). The Department of Education and Skills advise that a maximum of 27 children be allocated to a class.

Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. We are very proud of our multicultural context, with children from over 20 different cultural backgrounds. While the BoM asks parents/guardians to “respect the integrity of the school calendar by not planning holidays when the school is open” there are occasions when a family chooses to take their children out of the school for an extended period. When the BoM is reliably informed either “in writing” that a child has emigrated or enrolled in another school, he/she is taken off the school roll. The BoM is responsible for all children currently enrolled in the school during school hours only.

Our school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the DES which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

Application Procedures:

Procedures for enrolment of Junior Infants for the next school year:

- Opening date for application is the first working day in February of each academic year. The application form will be made live on the school’s website for parents/guardians to download on this day; www.coosannationalschool.ie
- Closing date for applications is the last school day of February of each academic year.

The school community and people living in the parish are made aware of this date by the following means:

- Parish Newsletter
- Informing pupils already in the school through text-a-parent
- School Website

Parents/Guardians fill in the application form, along with consent forms for transfer of information from pre-school to primary school, school trips, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), forwarding child details to Health Board for immunisation purposes, work/photo on school website etc.

Parents/Guardians are also requested to present a Birth Certificate. Each form is dated and numbered as it is received. Filling in an application form does not guarantee a place in the school. Applications must be fully completed with all documents attached and returned to school secretary on or before 3pm on the last school day of February.

Facilitation transfer into Junior Infants from home and/or Pre-School:

The Principal/Junior Infant teachers meet with all pre-school directors/managers during the final term of the year prior to enrolment to discuss the needs of entrants into Junior Infants for September with the purpose of easing transition from pre-school to primary school. Parents/Guardians give prior permission in writing to the Principal/Junior Infant teachers to discuss their child's progress with the pre-school directors/managers.

The Principal meets parents/guardians of all incoming infants in June. Parents/Guardians meet with the Principal in the GP room and are given a school information booklet on the school at this meeting, giving details of school uniform, books, Code of Behaviour, timetabling etc. The new entrants are brought to the Infant Rooms and are supervised by teachers and SNAs from the Infant classes. There is also an 'Information Meeting' in September where parents/guardians, class teachers and Principal are present to discuss the Junior Infants' year in more detail.

If a special need comes to light at this meeting, one which has not been noted on the application form, admission of the child may be deferred to allow the BoM time to assess and apply for the resources necessary to meet the needs of the child.

Parents/Guardians of children with special needs will have a meeting with an Infant Teacher at a later date in June.

Decision Making

Decisions in relation to applications are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children that are made by the Board of Management in accordance with school policy. **Coosan National School is bound by the rules for National Schools which states that a child may not be allowed to attend or be enrolled in a National School before the fourth anniversary of his/her birth. (Rule 64.1)**

In Coosan National School, in order to be enrolled, an applicant must be four years of age on or before April 30th preceding the September in respect of which the application for enrolment into Junior Infants. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management (BoM) in accordance with school policy. Places will be offered using the criteria set below. With regard to Junior Infants, age is also taken into account with older children being given preference over younger children. Applicants for Senior Infants to Sixth classes will be taken on a 'first come first served basis' as vacancies arise in individual classrooms keeping within the limits stated above and the criteria listed below, depending on the needs of the child (see Enrolment of Special Needs Children, below).

Criteria used in decision making by the BoM in relation to enrolment are:

- Health, welfare and needs of all children.
- Physical space in relation to class size, staffing provision and accommodation.
- Children applying for a place who have family members already in the school (mother, father, sister, brother) already will be facilitated within the limits stated above and depending on the needs of the child (see enrolment of Special Needs children, below)
- Children living within the traditional catchment area of the school will be given priority.
- All other applicants.

If the number of applicants for Junior Infants exceeds the number of places available, a waiting list will be drawn up and preference will be given to siblings of children already attending the school. For example, if there is one vacancy, the vacancy will be given to the eldest child, who has at least one sibling already attending the school. Intake numbers in Junior Infants will depend on whole school enrolment and subsequently may fluctuate from year to year.

In accordance with the Educational Welfare Act 2000, the BoM will notify parents/guardians of their decision within twenty-one days of the closing date for applications (the last school day of February). For applications received after the closing date, parents/guardians will be notified of the decision of the BoM within 21 days of receipt of the application. Parents/Guardians will also be informed of their right to appeal this decision under Section 29 of the Education Act.

Admission Day

Junior Infant pupils are encouraged to attend school from the 2nd day of the new school year. Admission to the Junior Infant class takes place once a year (August/September), except when a child is transferring from another school.

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

Parents/guardians are asked on the application form to list, detail and attach any reports/assessments/needs their child has had since the time they were born, or any concerns they may have about their child's behaviour or needs. If the Board of Management becomes aware in September (or earlier than September) that parents/guardians did not disclose fully the needs of their child on the application form or have withheld reports, the child's admission to the school may be deferred until the BoM has time to assess how the school could meet the needs specified in reports and/or until resources are in place to meet the child's needs.

Having received an application form, the school will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s), of the child prior to enrolment to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. The Board of Management of Coosan National School, through the Principal, will request a copy of all the child's medical and/or psychological report/s. If this is not available the Board of Management will request that the child be assessed immediately. This report is requested to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special education needs and to profile the support services required. Following receipt of the report, the Principal, on behalf of the BoM will assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report. If necessary, a full case conference involving all parties may be held. While recognising the rights of parent(s)/guardian(s) to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Coosan National School is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children and their siblings already enrolled. Following consultation and examination of reports, if the BoM (using balanced judgements), which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children, refuses enrolment the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed that they are entitled to appeal the decision under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. The Board of Management may decide to enrol the child but to defer admission until the resources the child needs are in place in the school, for example a ramp to allow wheelchair access etc.

Where the Board of Management deems that resources are required, the Principal, on behalf of the BoM will apply to the Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) for the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological or medical report. These resources may include for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: Teacher for Special Needs, Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other. If the SENO does not sanction the resources necessary to meet the child's needs the BoM will appeal the decision of the SENO.

The Board may decide to defer admission of an enrolled child to the school, pending

- The receipt of an assessment/report.
- The provision of appropriate resources by the DES to meet the needs specified in the psychological and/or medical report.

Pupils transferring from another school

In keeping with the Education Welfare Act 2000, parent(s)/guardian(s) may transfer their child from one Primary School to another, at any time of the year, when the transfer is made because of a change in the ordinary residence of the child. This is also subject to school policy and available space. When the application for enrolment is made the Principal shall ascertain from the parent(s)/guardian(s) whether the pupil was previously enrolled in another Primary School. In order to assess the needs of the child, the Principal will seek all reports relating to that child from the Principal of the school where the child previously attended. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are asked to give their permission to the Principal of Coosan National School, to seek such information on the enrolment application form.

Children enrolling from another Primary School locally may only do so at the start of a new term or immediately after mid-term.

Code of Behaviour

The school Code of Behaviour is for the protection and welfare of every child. This policy may be viewed on the school website www.coosannationalschool.ie

Medication

Parents/Guardians are asked to inform the school in writing if their child suffers from any long term or short term illness and if their child is on medication. No teacher can be required to administer medicine or drugs to a pupil. A member of staff who, with the consent of the BoM, does take on the responsibility for administering medicines takes on a heavy duty of care to discharge the responsibility correctly. Parents/Guardians contact the BoM in writing in relation to the administration of medication indemnifying the school.