

Admissions Policy



St Benignus NS, Balcaddan

1.0 Introduction

Our Admissions Policy has been formed, developed and revised by successive Boards of Management. It has also been known as our Enrolment Policy. The Board of Management of St Benignus NS, Balcaddan will endeavour to ensure the policy development is in the best interests of its pupils in a fair and equitable way.

2.0 Mission Statement

St Benignus NS, Balcaddan is a Roman Catholic co-educational school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. As a Roman Catholic school, the school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. We endeavour to equip each child with the skills and positive self-esteem to empower them to contribute to their community and become lifelong learners. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith. The Board of Management will endeavour to develop school policies that protect the Catholic ethos of the school.

3.0 Rationale

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of St Benignus NS, Balcaddan has the responsibility to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each classroom, bearing in mind:

- a) Size of/available space in classroom and supporting services/infrastructure.
- b) Educational needs of children of a particular age.
- c) Multi-grade classes.
- d) Pressure of children with special educational/behavioural needs.
- e) Department of Education and Skills maximum class average directives.
- f) The Health and Safety Policy of the school.

4.0 Aims

Our Admissions Policy, which has been ratified by the Board of Management, aims to preserve the characteristic spirit and ethos of St Benignus, NS, and serve the needs of the communities of Balscadden and Ring Commons. Presently our school consists of 8 mainstream classes accommodated in the main building. Our school's sewerage system is a septic tank – which was built in 1986 to meet the needs of a 6 teacher school. We now feel the system is working beyond the capacity for which it was intended.

- Hence one reason for our decision not to reacquire prefabricated buildings.
- Ancillary accommodation in the main building was intended to cater for a staff of 6. The present school adult population is 20 – so those rooms are operating at capacity.
- We would also like to preserve our green areas for the health and well being of our present school population and to maintain the rural and Green Schools ethos of the school.
- We deem a class to be full when there are 28 children (maximum) in the classroom. An exception to this may occur when there is a child or children with special needs in a classroom. If this scenario occurs the Board of Management may restrict the number of pupils in a classroom to less than 28 – depending on the child's or children's disability.

5.0 General Information

Name: St Benignus NS, Balscadden/Scoil Bhionnain Naofa, Baile Scadán

Address: Balscadden, Ring Commons, Co Dublin.

Denomination: Catholic.

Name of Patron: Archbishop of Dublin

- St Benignus NS, Balscadden is a co-educational vertical school with a staff of 14 teachers (including the Principal). The school caters for 220 pupils (30/09/18).
- Mainstream classes range from Junior Infants to 6th Class.
- The curricular programmes followed within the school are prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills. The school is funded by the Oireachtas and the Department of Education and Skills.
- The school opens for pupils at 9.00 a.m. (Monday to Friday). Formal lessons begin at 9.10 a.m. The school day ends for Junior and Senior Infants at 1.40 p.m., and for all other students at 2.40 p.m.

6.0 Application Procedure and Decision Making Process

Step 1: Request an application for the year of admission of your child.

Step 2: Send in a fully completed application by the date outlined by the Board of Management on the year of admission.

Step 3: Receive either a school place or a place on a list of children that may be admitted.

6.1 Introduction

Applications for admission of pupils for Junior Infants will be accepted at a time of year decided by the Board of Management. This date will be advertised on the school website.

Step 1

Parents/guardians may request that they are sent an application form for the relevant school year. These requests will be accepted all year round and must be made in person using the appropriate form. Parents/Guardians should understand that they are merely requesting an application form and in so doing, do not guarantee a place for their child in the school.

Step 2

The parents must receive and return a fully completed application. The following documents must be included:

- Completed Application form
- Original Birth Certificate.
- Proof of address dated within the last 6 months.

An application will not be treated as complete until such time as all the requested information above is received and is in order.

Further proof of address may be sought at the discretion of the Board of Management.

Any change of address by applicants that may occur shall be made known to the Board of Management.

It remains the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that they receive and return a fully completed application by a date set out by the Board of Management each year. This date will be advertised on the school website. The Board of Management of the school will make a decision in respect of the receipt of **a fully completed application**. If the various elements of the application are not in order, the place will be immediately offered to the next child on the list with a fully completed application in line with the Admissions Policy. Junior Infants will be offered a place on the basis of priority following the school's Admissions Policy.

Step 3

Notification of offer/refusal of a school place will be made in writing by post to the address supplied by the applicant within 21 days, and after the date set by the BOM, of receiving **a fully completed application**.

The following documents must have been included:

- Completed Application form
- Original Birth Certificate.
- Proof of address dated within the last 6 months.

An application will not be treated as complete until such time as all the requested information above is received and is in order.

A list of applicants that may be admitted will be compiled from the pupils who have sent in a fully completed application, but did not receive a place. In the case of a place not being available, the parents/guardians will be informed where they are on the list of applicants that may be admitted.

7.0 Admission Criteria

Children will be offered a place in St Benignus NS, Balcadden on the basis of priority following the admissions criteria below:

1. Those children who already have or had brothers or sisters in the school. Those children whose parent is a teacher in the school. *{If the number of these children exceeds the number of places available then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the eldest.}*

2. Those children who reside in Balcadden, Flemington (Bridgefoot Road), Flemington Park, Tubbersool, Tubbertown, Tullog, Milestown, Knocknagin, Coney Hill, Bow Hill, Ring Commons, Dermotstown, Delahasey, Folkstown, Forge Road, Inch, The Matt, Balrickard, Balgee, Walshestown Link, Knockbrack, Kitchenstown, East Curragh, Killougher, Hazardstown, Haystown, Whitestown, Reynoldstown, Balgaddy, Grangemount, Grougha Lane, Newtown. *{If the number of these children exceeds the number of places available, then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the eldest.}*

3. Those children either of whose parents/guardians has formerly been a pupil at St Benignus NS, Balcadden. *{If the number of these children exceeds the number of places available, then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the eldest.}*

4. Those children who reside outside of the Balcadden/Ring Commons parish area but who reside in the Balbriggan areas of New Haven, Dún Saithne, Mount Rochford, Hamlet Close (combined). *{If the number of these children exceeds the number of places available, then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the eldest.}*

5. Those children who live within the Balbriggan parish boundaries applying for a placement are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the groups from 1 to 4 have been allocated places. *{If the number of these children exceeds the number of places available, then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the eldest.}*

6. All children who apply to the school and are not residents within the Balbriggan parish boundaries are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the groups from 1 to 5 have been allocated places. *{If the number of these children exceeds the number of places available, then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the eldest.}*

PLEASE NOTE: Pupils must have reached their 4th birthday before 1st July previous to the September of their intended admission in Junior Infants in order to be considered for admission to a junior infant class. Parents are advised and encouraged to consult with the school principal to receive advice on choosing the appropriate year of intended admission.

8.0 Refusal to admit on the grounds of Exceptional Circumstances

The Board of Management of St Benignus, NS, Balcadden reserves the right to refuse admission in exceptional circumstances:

8.1 In the opinion of the BOM, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff and/or school property.

9.0 Pupil already admitted who transfers to a Special Unit/Special School

The Board of Management will ensure that a place remains available to a pupil who transfers from a class in the school to a Special Education unit, class or school until that child has completed their primary education. The Board believes that this is important in ensuring that the child's educational needs are prioritised.

10.0 Deferral of a place in Junior Infants on educational grounds

The Board of Management will defer a place for a child who is offered a place in Junior Infants, but whose parents/guardians accept the place and subsequently defer the place for a maximum of one year, based solely on educational criteria as evidenced by report(s) furnished by a suitably qualified diagnostician. This child will automatically qualify for a place in Category 1 of the Admissions Criteria of the subsequent year.

11.0 Pupil Transfer

Pupils may transfer to the school subject to our school Transfer Policy which is as follows:

- In the event of the class in which the pupil wishes to be enrolled being full, the pupil's name will be placed on the relevant list of children who may be admitted. A class is deemed to be full according to the criteria outlined earlier in the Admissions Policy. As a place becomes available the next child on the waiting list is offered a place subject to the school Admissions Criteria.
- The school must be provided with **a fully completed application** and information concerning the pupil's previous attendance at school and educational progress prior to admission.

The following documents must be included:

- Completed Application form
- Original Birth Certificate.
- Proof of address dated within the last 6 months

12.0 Right of Appeal

Parents/Guardians have the right of appeal against a decision to refuse admission under the relevant legislation. Full details on the procedures involved are included on the DES website.

13.0 Review dates

September/October 2008

September 2009

October 2010

January 2012

November 2012

September 2013

Revised October 2018

November 2014

November 2015

November 2016

November 2017

October 2018

15.0 Ratification

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ (date)

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____