

Admissions Policy of



Balscadden NS

School Address: Balscadden, Ring Commons, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

Roll number: 09492w

School Patron: Archbishop of Dublin

1.0 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 approved by the school patron on (date to be added). 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 Balscadden NS 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 to any person who requests it.

2.0 Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Balscadden NS 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 Admission Statement

Balscadden NS will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the 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.

Balscadden NS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4.0 Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5.0 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

5.0 Oversubscription

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:

1. Those children who already have or had brothers or sisters in the school. Those children whose parent is a teacher in the school.

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, Grougaha Lane, Newtown.

3. Those children either of whose parents/guardians has formerly been a pupil at St Benignus NS, Balcadden.

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*).

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.

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.

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.

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), the following arrangements will apply:

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.

The Board of Management shall 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.

The Board of Management shall 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 Oversubscription Admissions Criteria (Section 5) of the subsequent year.

6.0 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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
 - (I) an early intervention class, or
 - (II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school; (other than in relation to a fee charging school or a plc or further education and training course run by a school in respect of those courses)
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; (other than in relation to:
 - admission to (a) a special school or (b) 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 and/or
 - admission to an Irish language school, in accordance with the provisions of section 62(9) of the act
- (d) the occupation, 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; (other than in the case of admission to the residential element of a boarding school or to a plc or further education and training course run by a school)
- (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, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

(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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

7.0 Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Balscadden NS will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- 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

(Please see section 13 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 14 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

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.

8.0 Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

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 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).

9.0 Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Balscadden NS 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.

10.0 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 Balscadden NS 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 9 above.

11.0 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.

12.0 Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Balscadden NS 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 Balscadden NS 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.

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.

13.0 Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school’s admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

14.0 Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes other than the school's intake group are as follows:

Parents/guardians will submit a fully completed application to the school office. A fully completed application shall consist of a fully completed application form, a copy of the birth certificate and proof of address. The Application Form will be available on the school website (www.balscadden.com) and in hard copy from the school office. A reply will be sent to parents/guardians in a timely fashion, but not later than three weeks from the date of receipt of a fully completed application. The same selection criteria will apply as outlined in the Oversubscription section of this policy (Section 5). In the event of a place not being available parents will be informed of where they are on the waiting list. A review will take place in June every year which will update the waiting list in place for each class.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

In the event of a place becoming available in the course of the school year that place will be offered to the student who is number one on the waiting list for that class. Application for these places are outlined above.

15. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Balscadden NS or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever 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.

16.0 Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students. Religious education is provided for pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church. Catholic children will be provided with religious experiences that will help to develop their faith, such as prayer and sacramental preparation. In addition to these activities, all children will also learn about and from the beliefs, teachings and practices of the great religious traditions of the world, with a particular focus on Christianity. This type of learning is open to, and inclusive of, all children, regardless of their faith background. Children from all faith traditions and none are therefore welcome to participate in the religious education programme that the school provides. The Catholic ethos of the school is made clear to all parents at enrolment and again at induction of new parents.

Where parents wish for their children to 'opt out' of religious instruction a meeting will be arranged with the principal of the school and a number of options can be explored and agreed upon. They include staying within the classroom following an interesting, educationally appropriate and child-friendly activity; supervised project work in another room; or parent/guardian absenting the child for the purpose of receiving religious instruction elsewhere. The principal will make every effort to work with parents/guardians to ensure that a satisfactory arrangement is put in place to accommodate the needs of every pupil.

17.0 Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of 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.

18.0 Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of 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.

19.0 Review dates

September/October 2008, September 2009, October 2010

January 2012, November 2012, September 2013

November 2014, November 2015

November 2016, November 2017

October 2018, November, 2019

April 2020.

20.0 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: _____