

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 24th September, 2020. 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

St. Benignus N.S., Balscadden is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and

- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Balscadden NS shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct 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.

Balscadden NS will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required to do so by the Council.

Balscadden NS will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998.

4.0 Special Educational Needs

St. Benignus N.S. does not currently have a special class, however, our school is fully committed to inclusivity, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with special educational needs.

5.0 Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6.0 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

St. Benignus N.S. is a Roman Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6.0 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. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and children who reside in Balscadden, Flemington (Bridgefoot Road), Flemington Park, Tubbersool, Tubbertown, Tullog, Milestown, Knocknagin, Coney Hill, Bow Hill, Ring Commons, Dermotstown, Delahasey, Folkstown, Clonard, Forge Road, Inch, The Matt, Balrickard, Balgee, Walshestown Link, Knockbrack, Kitchenstown, East Curragh, Killougher, Hazardstown, Haystown, Whitestown, Reynoldstown, Balgaddy, Grangemount, Grougha Lane, Newtown. (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking).

2. Children of staff (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking).

3. Those children who reside outside of the Balscadden/Ring Commons parish area but who reside in the Balbriggan areas of New Haven, Dún Saithne, Mount Rochford, Hamlet Close, Taylor Hill (*combined*). (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking)

4. 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. (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking)

5. 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 4 have been allocated places. (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking)

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:

In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

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 request parents/guardians making an application to furnish all available information on their child in the case of additional needs. This will not affect the child's admission to the school whatsoever. However, it allows the school to make every effort to ensure that the child's needs will be catered for upon admission to the school.

7.0 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 siblings of a student attending or having attended the school as per Enrolment Criteria.
- (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).

8.0 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 14.0 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15.0 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.

9.0 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 18.0 below for further details).

10.0 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.

11.0 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 10.0 above.

12.0 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.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

13.0 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.

14.0 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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.0.

15.0 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 6.0). 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. The application process for these places are outlined above.

16.0 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.

17.0 Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has 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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18.0 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.

19.0 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.

20.0 Review dates

September/October 2008, September 2009, October 2010

January 2012, November 2012, September 2013

November 2014, November 2015

November 2016, November 2017

Revised October 2023

October 2018, November, 2019

April 2020, August 2020, 5/10/2020, 18/10/2021, 24/10/2022, 2/10/2023.

20.0 Ratification

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 2nd October, 2023.

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____