

Enrolment Policy for St. Joseph's NS School

Introduction

St. Joseph's NS Mell is a Catholic primary school under the patronage of Seán Cardinal Brady of the diocese of Armagh. We are a co-educational school catering for children from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. We uphold, foster and encourage the Catholic ethos in all our school activities, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule which is on display at the office door in the main school building. Although our school population is predominantly Catholic, where possible we welcome all children.

- Parents wishing to enrol their child(ren) in St. Joseph's N.S., are requested to return a completed Enrolment Application Form, together with birth and baptismal certificates and PPS numbers to the school before May 31st each year. It is incumbent upon the parents/guardian to inform the school of any special needs, physical or educational requirements of the child.
- While recognising the right of parents to enrol their children in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of St. Joseph's must also respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the BOM reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:
 - (a) Size of available space in classrooms
 - (b) Educational needs of children of a particular age
 - (c) Multi-grade classes
 - (d) Presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs
 - (e) DES maximum class average directives (currently a maximum average of 30 children)
- In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class/standard exceeding the number of places available, preceding or during the school year (due to the BOM being unable to provide suitable accommodation, or recruit the required teaching staff) the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment
 - a) **Age of the children in question i.e. priority given to older children**
 - b) Children living within the parish who have been baptised Catholic
 - c) Children of members of the School Staff
 - d) Sibling of children already enrolled
 - e) Other children living within the parish
 - f) Children whose home address is closest to the school.

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to a pupil in exceptional cases which could arise where either

- (a) the pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from DES, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education
- (b) in the opinion of the Board of Management (BOM), the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to staff and to school property
- Other children may be enrolled during the school year if they are newly resident in the parish. These children must bring with them school reports from their previous school at the time of enrolment.

- Children with special needs are welcome and every effort will be made to provide them with an appropriate education. It is incumbent on the Department of Education and Science to provide relevant resources to ensure the pupil can benefit to the maximum level. The BOM will request copies of relevant reports or may request that the child be assessed immediately in order to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child and to profile the support services required. Notwithstanding the availability of such resources, parents who are dissatisfied with the level of educational provision in our school are advised to consider a special school that is designed and resourced to specifically cater for the needs of children with special educational needs.
- Children enrolled in our school are expected to co-operate with and support BOM Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. The BOM places responsibility on parents/guardians for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way.
- Appeals Procedure
In line with Section 28 of the Education Act 1998, parents who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed in writing to the chairperson of the Board stating the grounds for the appeal and lodged within ten days of receiving the refusal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeals hearing, may appeal to the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act. This application to appeal must be made on the official DES appeals form which will be issued by the school. This form must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of refusal to enrol from the school.