



## **Admission Policy of Ballygar N.S. Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál**

**School Address: Ballygar, Co. Galway.**

**Roll number:07455G**

**School Patron: Bishop of Elphin.**

### **1. 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 31<sup>st</sup> August 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 Ballygar N.S 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. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

Ballygar N.S is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Elphin. As per our mission statement our aim is to provide for the academic, physical, emotional, social and spiritual education of our pupils.

“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 Ballygar N.S 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.

## **3. Admission Statement**

Ballygar N.S 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.

Ballygar N.S 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. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school

In Ballygar N.S. we do not currently have a special class or unit attached to our school. However we are fully committed to the principle of inclusion. We at Ballygar N.S. are committed to providing the best possible educational service to pupils enrolled in our school with special educational needs.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) who wish to enrol a child who has specific needs follow admission procedures as outlined in section 5 (for Junior infant) or Section 15(in the case of child wishing to transfer school). It is the responsibility of parents / guardians of any child, for the child's own welfare, to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form. Parents/guardians are required to furnish all relevant documentation on the child to the principal and to assist in ensuring that all necessary support resources and structures are in place in order to ensure that their child and all other pupils attending the school receive the highest quality of education possible. Failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

#### 5. Admission of Students

##### Registration of Interest to Enrol

It is the tradition of Ballygar N.S. to facilitate parents who express an interest in enrolling their child(ren) in the school. Parents who notify the secretary/principal of their interest before the Annual Admission Statement (of the enrolment year in question) will be added to a list. Each person on the list will receive correspondence, namely the Annual Admission statement once the school's Annual Admission Statement has been published. **Please note, expressing an interest or being put on a list does not guarantee admission.**

##### School Admissions Notice for New Intake Junior Infants

The School will in the month of January communicate and distribute the 'Ballygar N.S Annual Admission Notice' to the wider school community. All children who will be 4 years of age by the 1<sup>st</sup> of September may apply to enrol. The school will

- Correspond the notice in writing or email to parents who registered their interest to enrol for the following September
- Publish in the website the date forms will be accepted from and the deadline when such forms need to be returned
- Send the Admission Notice home to the families of the school
- Put The Admission Notice on display in a prominent place in the reception foyer of the school
- Distribute the Admission Notice to local playschool/Montessori.
- Put a notification in the Parish Newsletter

- Put a notification in school newsletter
- Email the Admission Notice to the pre-schools in the immediate locality

### **Enrolment Evening**

An enrolment evening/open evening will take place in January where parents/guardians along with their child(ren) will be invited into the school to meet with current teaching staff and to view school facilities. This will take place prior to the deadline for submission of enrolment forms.

### **Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#) 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
- c) a pupil has been suspended or expelled from another school or attempts have been made by a family to mislead or withhold information about an expulsion or suspension.

Please note: Ballygar N.S. has a strong Catholic Ethos but welcomes children of all religions and none. Ballygar N.S. however may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

## **6. 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:

#### **Selection criteria**

1. Priority to be given to siblings of student(s) already attending or having attended the school. If the class is oversubscribed on this criterion then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the oldest applicant, until all the places are allocated
2. Children of current staff members. If the class is oversubscribed on this criterion then places will be allocated on the basis of age starting with the oldest applicant, until all the places are allocated
3. Children who reside within the local hinterland from which the school traditionally serves or has served. If the class is oversubscribed on this criterion then the school will look at road distance and those living furthest from the school will be eliminated first.

## **7. 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,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (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;
- (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 a siblings of a student attending or having attended the school as outlined in Section 6 (selection 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 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 only).

## 8. Decisions on applications

### (i) Application Enrolment Deadline

The Application Enrolment Deadline will be included and published on the school's Annual Admission Notice

### (ii) Decisions

All decisions on applications for admission to Ballygar N.S will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- 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

The Board of Management of Ballygar N.S., in its Policy of Admissions/Enrolment, respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class, bearing in mind:

- Integration of children with Special Needs into Mainstream Classes
- Health and Safety Concerns regarding Staff and Children
- Available classroom space
- Multi-grade classes
- Educational needs of the children
- Department of Education and Science class size directives
- That appropriate Supports and Resources are available
- Time of school year

Admission to the school is, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources, and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission.

(Please see [section 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) 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. 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](#) below for further details).

## **10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from Ballygar N.S, you must in all instances 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. 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 Ballygar N.S 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 [section 10](#) above.
- (v) failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

## **12. 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. 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 Ballygar N.S 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 Ballygar N.S 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.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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. 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.

## **15. 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 or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

1. The availability of space including classroom accommodation and class size.
2. The ability of the school to meet the physical, emotional and educational needs of the child
3. The provision by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of necessary documentation when required.
4. Assurance by parent(s)/guardian(s) that the pupil will abide by the schools Code of Discipline.

Section 8 part (ii) also applies to admission of students to other years.

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:

1. The availability of space.
2. The ability of the school to meet the physical, emotional and educational needs of the child.
3. The provision by the parent(s) / guardian(s) of the necessary documentation when required.
4. Assurance by the parent(s) /guardian(s) that the pupil will abide by the schools Code of Discipline.

Section 8 part (ii) also applies to admission of students to other years.

If oversubscribed a parent/guardian can request to be put on a waiting list.

The school requires the following information of transferring pupils

- Details of report which relate to the educational welfare of the child (including any psychological, speech and language, occupational therapy and other such assessments/reports)
- Testing results from previous school
- Details of attendances and absences from previous school
- Details of previous school including, class child was in, Name and contact details of teachers/principal
- Contact with DES (in some cases)

## **16. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees**

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Management of Ballygar N.S 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. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parent/s 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), to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

## **18. 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.

### **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. Roles and Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that this policy is brought to the attention of parent(s)/guardian(s) of children being enrolled in the school.

The success of this policy will be based on the feedback from parents and teachers. It should ensure that there is no overcrowding in classrooms and that the education of the pupils runs smoothly from term to term.

This policy was ratified by the Board of management on \_\_\_\_\_ and is subject to review as the need arises and at periods of 3 years from the above date..

\_\_\_\_\_

Mr Frank Muldoon

Chairman Board of Management.

\_\_\_\_\_

Helene Hanley

Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_