

Admission Policy of Holy Trinity NS

**Newport Road
Westport
Co. Mayo**

**08302J
School Patron
Bishop Michael Burrows**

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 on 30th April 2020. It is published on the School's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Holy Trinity National School'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 to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Holy Trinity NS is a co-educational primary school with a Church of Ireland ethos, under the patronage of the Bishop of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe– currently Bishop Michael Burrows.

“Church of Ireland/Anglican” ethos in the context of a Church of Ireland primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Anglican Christian tradition. This seeks to nurture and encourage the formation of the intellectual, academic, sporting, social and religious abilities of each child within the framework of the community of faith. A Church of Ireland ethos encourages intellectual diversity of thought and encourages the individual to seek to understand themselves, the world around them and the connection between the world and the divine. This understanding of school ethos promotes pluralism in thought and living, in the context of a Christian school community. Drawing on its Anglican tradition, the Church of Ireland school encourages home/family involvement, highlighting the importance of the family/home in the social and emotional development of the child, and more broadly, the community of the school and church.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Holy Trinity National School 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.

Mission Statement

Holy Trinity School exists

- To enrich each child in mind, heart and spirit, and prepare him/her for life in age-appropriate ways.
- Within the School's Christian ethos, to help our children grow in faith, hope and love, with respect for and in co-operation with the religion, denomination and/or philosophy of their homes.
- To encourage and enable each child's gifts and answer each child's needs within the framework of a well-structured environment and in a climate of trust and love.
- To help each child become an active and creative learner at his/her own speed.
- To give each child the basic training he/she needs to become an integrated and self-reliant rounded personality, well-informed for their age, and ready to participate as a citizen.

Ethos Statement

- Holy Trinity School is a Church of Ireland school. Its values are based on the example and teachings of Jesus as understood by that Church.
- All pupils are valued and respected for who they are, including but not limited to issues of religion, gender, race, social background, family circumstances, educational achievement, physical characteristics or intellectual functioning.
- Pupils are treated encouragingly and fairly, and experience a sense of caring and belonging. The safety of each child is guarded as of first importance
- Honesty, truthfulness, justice, fairness, sensitivity to others and civic responsibility are nurtured and protected.
- Spiritual, moral, and religious development are encouraged as are intellectual, social and academic development.
- The traditions and teachings of the Church of Ireland inform the position taken in regard to moral issues which arise in the teaching of secular subjects.
- Prayer and Religious Education in our school are so conducted as to protect and nurture responsible freedom of thought and personal relationship with God.
- Religious Education is a core subject and happens at specified times in the school timetable.
- When space allows we enrol and welcome not only Church of Ireland children but children of any Christian denomination, of any other religion, and of none. The life and work of the School happens in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for religious difference.

- As the school is part of the local Church of Ireland parish, the Rector of Holy Trinity Parish visits the school.
- Our pupils and their families are encouraged to nourish their lives by regular prayer and its several honest equivalents, and by attending the parish church or the places of worship or of encouragement of their own choice.
- We respect and affirm the role of our children's parents as the primary educators of their children. We ask and need their support for the objectives and work of the School.

3. Admission Statement

Holy Trinity 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.

- Holy Trinity NS will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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 requested to do so by the Council.
- Holy Trinity NS will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

Primary schools receiving applications from applicants of a minority religion

Holy Trinity NS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the School in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where:

- a) the School is oversubscribed (please see section 12 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 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

All denominational schools

Holy Trinity NS is a Church of Ireland school and may refuse to admit as a student a person where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the School.

Notification of Intention to Apply Form

- 4.1 Those intending to apply for enrolment of a student in the School (the “**Intending Applicant**”) should contact the School and request a copy of the Notification of Intention to Apply Form. Submission of the Notification of Intention to Apply Form does not offer any priority whatsoever to the Intending Applicant nor does it in any way guarantee a place for him/her either for the term and year requested nor for any other term or year.
- 4.2 If the intention is to seek to enrol a child in less than 21 days, an Application Form should be requested. There must be full compliance with this Policy in terms of the application.
- 4.3 Those who have returned a Notification of Intention to Apply Form will be sent an Application Form in the proposed year of proposed enrolment in the School.

Applications for Admissions

- 4.4 All applications for a place in the School shall be submitted to the School Principal on the approved Application Form. An Ethos Statement and Code of Behaviour (if provided at this stage) will be furnished to each Applicant with a copy of the Application Form at the appropriate time, in advance of the Admissions Application period.
- 4.5 The application must be submitted during the Admissions Application period ie between 9.00 am on 1st February and 3 pm on 29th February.
- 4.6 The School will not accept applications in advance of 9.00 am on 1st February or after 3 pm on 29th February.
- 4.7 The strict deadline for receipt of fully completed Application Forms is 3 pm on 29th February
- 4.8 Only those Application Forms that have been completed in full, signed, dated, accompanied by relevant supporting documentation and submitted by the closing date will be considered by the Board. In order for an application to be considered, all required accompanying documentation must be provided prior to the closing date.

- 4.9 If requested by the school an Application Form must be accompanied by:
- (i) A birth certificate for the student in respect to whom the application has been made (the “**Applicant Student**”)
 - (ii) Proof of address in the form of a utility bill in the Applicant’s name (or in one of the Applicant’s names where there is more than one Applicant), which must be dated no later than three months prior to the closing date
 - (iii) Statement confirming that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion, where applicable, as outlined below
 - (iv) Evidence to support the statement that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion, where applicable, as outlined below.
- 4.10 It should be noted that submission of an Application Form does not confer a right to admission nor does it guarantee a place in the School.
- 4.11 Submitting inaccurate information on an Application Form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void ab initio. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn, the place being reallocated and the Applicant Student being placed last on the waiting list.
- 4.12 Submission of the Application Form early in the Admissions Application period is not a factor in the allocation of places in the School. If an application is submitted prior to the Admissions Application Period, the application will not be considered by the Board.
- 4.13 Applicant Students, in respect of whom applications are made for junior infants, must have attained their 4th birthday (or older if applicable) no later than the first school day in the school year in respect of which the application for enrolment is made.

Consideration of the Applications

- 4.14 The Board having considered the applications, will issue its decisions in writing within 21 days of the closing date.
- 4.15 Waiting lists for Applicant Students, only apply for the school year in respect of which the application for enrolment was made and do not carry forward to subsequent years.
- 4.16 Applicants who have been offered a place must inform the School, by completing and returning the admissions acceptance form within 14 calendar days of being offered a place. Failure to do so within this timeframe will result in the place being forfeited and being reallocated.
- 4.17 Any contact with and/or lobbying of school personnel and/or board members regarding an application for admission will automatically disqualify the applicant and a place will not be offered.
- 4.18 The foregoing conditions are subject to internal review from time to time and may be changed pursuant to other factors including DES/patron requirements, changes in legislation etc.

5. 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:

Note: In the case of a primary school that intends to give priority in admission to a student of a minority religion in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000, the school must include details of the arrangements for same here

5.1 Holy Trinity National School is a Church of Ireland school. In the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places, the priority categories below, which are listed in order of priority, are used to determine the priority given to applications in the descending order outlined below from (a) to (d) as follows:

- (a) **Priority Category 1:** An Applicant Student who is a member of the Church of Ireland or a Protestant reformed church or is a member of a minority religion which has the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the School¹ and who lives within the boundary of Holy Trinity Parish.
- (b) **Priority Category 2:** An Applicant Student who is a member of the Church of Ireland, or a Protestant reformed church or is a member of a minority religion which has the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the school² and who lives within the boundary of the Aughaval Group of Parishes.
- (c) **Priority Category 3:** An Applicant Student who is a member of the Church of Ireland, or a Protestant reformed church or is a member of a minority religion which has the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to the programme of religious instruction/education which is provided in the school³ and who lives beyond the boundary of the Aughaval Group of Parishes.
- (d) **Priority Category 4:** All other Applicant Students who comply with the terms of this Policy.

In respect of priority categories 1, 2 and 3 above, the Applicant must provide the following documentation with the application form in order for the application to be complete, as the School must satisfy itself that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion and that it provides a programme of religious instruction or religious education which is of the same religious ethos as, or a similar religious ethos to, the religious ethos of the minority religion of the Applicant Student.

- (i) a statement from the Applicant confirming (i) that the Applicant Student is a member of a minority religion and (ii) that the Applicant wishes the Applicant Student to be educated in a school that provides a programme of religious instruction/education which is of the same religious ethos, or a similar religious ethos to, the religious ethos of the minority religion of the Applicant Student.

and

- (ii) evidence from the Applicant to support the statement that the Applicant Student is a member of the minority religion. This evidence will consist of:

¹ As defined in Section 7(A)(2) of the Equal Status Act

² As defined in Section 7(A)(2) of the Equal Status Act

³ As defined in Section 7(A)(2) of the Equal Status Act

- a letter from the relevant religious leader confirming, that the Applicant Student is a member of the minority religion or
- the signature and stamp of the relevant Church leader on the application form confirming, that the Applicant Student is a member of the minority religion **or**
- a baptismal record issued by the relevant minority religion which confirms that the Applicant Student has been baptised as a member of the minority religion.

It is to be noted that where oversubscription occurs in any one of the above priority categories, priority will be given within the priority category (and only in that priority category) to Applicant Students (1) who have siblings attending or who have attended the school (“Sibling Applicant Students”) and (2) who have parents or grandparents who have attended the school. Where the number of Sibling Applicant Students in such a priority category, exceeds the available number of places, the remaining places will be allocated to Sibling Applicant Students using a lottery system. Where the number of Sibling Applicant Students in such priority category does not exceed the number places available, the remaining places in this category will be allocated using a lottery system. Where the number of Applicant Students who have parents or grandparents who have attended the school in such a priority category, exceeds the available number of places, the remaining places will be allocated to Sibling Applicant Students using a lottery system. Where the number of Sibling Applicant Students in such priority category does not exceed the number places available, the remaining places in this category will be allocated using a lottery system.

Where the Applicant Students in a category are not successful in achieving a place, their names will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which such names were drawn in the category. Applicants will be informed of the Applicant Student’s place on the waiting list as it applies in the particular priority category.

6. 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, 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.
- (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. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Holy Trinity National School 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. 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. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Holy Trinity 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. 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 Holy Trinity 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 section 9 above.

11. 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).

12. 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 Holy Trinity National School 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 Holy Trinity 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.

Applicant students 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.

13. 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. Applicant students will be offered a place if a place is available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 12 of this policy.

14. 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:

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. Applicant students will be offered a place in the relevant class if a place is available. In the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places in the relevant class, the school will apply the selection criteria set out in Section 4 and 5 of this policy to those applications. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 12 of this policy.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Holy Trinity National School 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

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)/guardians or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

17. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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.

Ratification and Review

This Policy was ratified by the Board on 5th May 2020 and follows guidelines issued by the Patron in respect of admissions.

This Enrolment Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Board.

_____ Date _____

Reviewed February 2023

Date of next review 2026