



MAYNOOTH EDUCATE TOGETHER SCHOOL ENROLMENT POLICY

1 Preamble

This policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. Maynooth Educate Together National School operates in accordance with the rules for National Schools and other regulations as may be laid down by the Department of Education and Science (DES) from time to time. It is also dependent on such grants and teacher resources as are provided by the Department. All school policies must have regard to the resources and funding provided. The school follows the curricular programmes as prescribed by the Department of Education and Science and his may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

The school operates within the context and parameters of all of the above and having regard to the following:

- The regulations and programmes set down by DES and in particular those regulations relating to class size, staffing and provision and accommodation
- The rights of the Patron body as set down in the Education Act
- The funding and resources available
- The health and safety of pupils and staff

The school supports the following principles

- Inclusiveness, with particular regard to the enrolment of children from all backgrounds; social, religious, cultural, racial; and with regard to children with special needs
- Equality of access and participation in the school

2 Objectives

The Board of Management aims by this policy to ensure implementation of the "first come first served" enrolment principle and to clarify the enrolment/admissions procedures.

3 Scope

This policy applies to mainstream and ASD classes of METNS.

4 Definitions

4.1 Pre-enrolment

Pre-enrolment is an act of placing a child's name on the school's pre-enrolment list and assigning him/her a unique pre-enrolment number. By pre-enrolling a child, parents/guardians express that they wish their child attends METNS at some point in the future. To pre-enrol a child, parents/guardians need to submit a pre-enrolment form.

4.2 Pre-enrolment list

Only children whose names are included in the pre-enrolment list can be offered a place in METNS, subject to availability of places as determined by the Board of Management.

4.3 Enrolment

Children whose parents/guardians receive and accept offer of a place in METNS are subsequently enrolled in the school.

5 Provisions

5.1 General Provisions

Children enrolling in mainstream classes must be 4 years old before the 1st of September in the year that they are due to start school. Children enrolling in ASD classes must be 5 years old before the 1st of September in the year that they are due to start school, so that they can avail of specialized early services provided by organizations such as St John of God in full extent.

Parents/guardians must complete a pre-enrolment form for their child. This form should be returned to the school or to the Enrolment Officer. Once it is returned the date on which it was received is immediately registered.

All pre-enrolments are entered into the pre-enrolment list in the order in which they are received. Priority for a place in the school is determined solely by the date on which the child's name is entered on the pre-enrolment list. Children will be offered places strictly following the ranking of the pre-enrolment numbers. Parents/guardians are advised to put their children's names on the list as soon as possible after the child is born.

In October/November of each year the Board of Management will determine the number of places for which application forms can be issued for the next year. Application forms will consequently be provided to parents/guardians in the order as per the pre-enrolment list. Parents/guardians must complete application forms within 14 days otherwise the position on the pre-enrolment list will be forfeited.

Upon receipt of a completed application form, offers of places will be made and parents/guardians will be required to complete Pupil Data sheet. Offers must be accepted and Pupil Data sheets returned within 14 days or the place will be forfeited and application form will be provided to the next child on the pre-enrolment list.

Junior Infants places may be deferred for a maximum of one year, provided that the child will be under the age of 6 by 1st September of the year when he/she starts school. Deferral does not guarantee a place the following year. A child whose offer of a place is deferred will retain his/her pre-enrolment number and registered date of pre-enrolment for the following year's list.

Junior Infants who have taken up an offer in the school and defer after the school year has started will be treated as if the deferral had taken place before actual enrolment.

Prior to enrolling a pupil, the principal teacher or a nominated person will provide the parents/guardians of the child with a copy of the school's Positive Behaviour Policy. As a condition of enrolling a child, his or her parents/guardians are required to confirm in writing that the Positive Behaviour Policy so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child (Education Welfare Act 2000, Sect. 23 a).

The school reserves the right to defer or refuse enrolment to any student where either:

- 1) In the opinion of the Board of Management the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.
- 2) The student has special needs such that even with additional resources available from the Department of Education & Science and the Department of Health the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
- 3) Admission of the student would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child or with the effective provision of education for other children within METNS, as determined by the Board of Management.

5.2 Pre-Enrolment Rules

1. The pre-enrolment officer upon receipt of completed pre-enrolment forms endorses each form with a unique, sequential pre-enrolment number. If more than one form is received on the same day, they are ordered by post date on the envelope. If the post date is the same, they are put in alphabetical order.
2. Each child will be placed on the pre-enrolment list according to the pre-enrolment number.
3. Class lists will be kept for each year. Children will be ranked in pre-enrolment number order on these lists e.g. Junior Infants - 6th Class/ASD classes.
4. No guarantees of places are given or implied by pre-enrolment.
5. The Board of Management of METNS reserves the right to modify these rules at any time. Revised Pre-enrolment rules will be posted on the Maynooth ETNS website and posted to parents/guardians whose children are placed on the pre-enrolment list. Modifications shall take effect 30 calendar days following posting of the new rules.

5.3 Pupils Transferring

Pupils may transfer to the school subject to school policy, available space and in some cases, the approval of the Department of Education and Science. It is a requirement of the Board of Management that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress be communicated between schools (to come in to being as per Education Welfare Act (2000)).

Where entry is requested to higher classes, during the course of the school year:

- a. A pre-enrolment form is to be completed in the normal way.
- b. Confirmation that the child was enrolled in another National School must be provided.
- c. The child's name will be placed on the pre-enrolment list for the following September.
- d. A place may then be offered provided:
 - i. There is a place available in the present class
 - ii. The child's place on the pre-enrolment list is such that a place would have been offered, for the following September, in the enrolment process.

5.4 Provisions Applicable to Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

General Provisions provided above apply unless superseded by provisions included in this section.

In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs the Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, will request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report, the Board of Management will assess how the school can meet the needs specified in the report. The Principal will meet with the parents/guardians to discuss the child's needs and to establish the school's suitability to meet those needs. The Principal will also make contact with the relevant professionals who have been dealing with the child. Where the Board of Management deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the Special Education Needs Organiser (NCSE see Circular 01/05) to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological and/or medical report. These resources may include for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other.

It may be necessary for the Board of Management in consultation with Principal to decide to defer enrolment of a particular child, pending:

- The receipt of an assessment report
- The provision of appropriate resources by the Department of Education and Science to meet the needs specified in the psychological/medical reports.

Maynooth Educate Together National School has been sanctioned two special classes for the education of children who meet the diagnostic criteria for Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Provisions applicable to enrolment in these classes are provided below.

5.5 Special Provisions Applicable to Enrolment in ASD Classes

The ASD Classes at METNS cater for children of primary school going age i.e. 4-13 years. No child should be older than 13 years during his or her last year in the school. Assessment and classification of autism/autistic spectrum disorder by a psychiatrist, clinical psychologist using DSM-IV or ICD-10 criteria, or multi-disciplinary assessment of same by a professional team including a clinical psychologist is required. METNS does not operate a catchment area. The maximum class size is six pupils.

The purpose of ASD classes is to prepare children for/support their integration into teaching and learning activities of mainstream classes. A range of teaching methodologies will be used in the ASD Classes. The methodologies employed will aim to optimally address the needs of all of the children in the ASD Classes. This will accord with the eclectic approach recommended by the Department of Education and Science.

A child may be phased in gradually to the ASD Classes through a mutually agreed process between the school and the parents of the child.

The Board of Management is concerned to ensure the child's placement is reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure the placement continues to be appropriate. The school reserves the right to review the child's progress on regular basis typically at the conclusion of the academic year to determine whether this is indeed an appropriate school placement for the child. If the Board of Management concludes that the placement is not suitable, a meeting with parents/guardians will be organized and further steps discussed.

General Provisions related to enrolment as provided in section 5.1 apply unless superseded by special provisions included in this section.

5.5.1 Enrolment Advisory Board

Applications for placement will be considered by an Enrolment Advisory Board. The Enrolment Advisory Board will consist of the school Principal, a member of the Board of Management and a suitably qualified member of staff or Board of Management. Members of the advisory board will be nominated by the Board of Management.

The Enrolment Advisory Board will consider the application when a vacancy arises within the special classes. Members of the Enrolment Advisory Board may choose to meet with the child and his/her parents/guardians prior to reaching a final decision. The Enrolment Advisory Board will advise the BOM on the placement of the child.

The final decision as to the placement of a child in the Special Classes lies with the Board of Management.

5.5.2 Assessment Criteria for Admission to our Special Classes for Children with Autism

This assessment may involve meeting the parents/guardians and child at the school. The school will meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. Where necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held, which may include additional participants, as appropriate.

A child will be deemed eligible for an offer of placement when all of the following criteria have been met:

1. A fully completed application form for enrolment has been submitted to the school by the parents/guardians.
2. A letter of acceptance from Beechpark Services has been received by the school outlining if the child is receiving services in his/her current placement or is on the waiting list for services.
3. The child has a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder. This diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure.
4. The diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder is without significant intellectual impairment.
5. A recent recommendation (within two years of the proposed admission date) must be provided by the above professional (point 3) indicating that a placement in a Special Class for Children with Autism in a mainstream school is warranted.
6. If the child also presents with a general learning disability, it should fall within the general, average or mild range (this diagnosis must also be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure.)
7. The Board of Management deems that the school has in place, within the school staffing complement and school facilities and in terms of clinical services, the resources to meet the special education needs of the child.
8. The child is at least 5 years of age on or before 1st September prior to starting school.
9. The educational provision being provided to the children currently in the ASD Classes will not be detrimentally effected by the level of specialised intervention required for the new child.

If the school cannot meet the needs of a child or if a child does not meet the above criteria for placement in our Special Classes, the following actions will take place.

- (1) The school will notify, in writing, the parents/guardians of the rationale for the decision.
- (2) The school will notify, in writing, the National Educational Welfare Board and the National Council for Special Education, Department of Education of the decision and if applicable of the requirements necessary for the school to meet the specified needs of the child.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

The Enrolment Officer, Principal and school secretary are responsible for implementation of the Policy. Further clarification on any aspect of the document may be sought from the Enrolment Officer of the Board of Management or the School Principal.

7 Related Documents

7.1 Selected External Documents

1. Education Act 1998
2. Education Welfare Act 2000
3. DES Circular Sp Ed 01/05
4. NCSE Circular 01/05

7.2 Internal Documents

1. METNS Positive Behaviour policy
2. Internal Procedures for Pre-Enrolments and Offers of Places

8 Review and Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly.

The Board of Management of METNS reserves the right to modify this policy at any time. Any revised policy will be posted on the Maynooth ETNS website, and parents/guardians whose children are placed on the pre-enrolment list will be notified in written. Modifications shall take effect 30 calendar days following posting of the new policy.

Approved by the Board of Management:

Date: 9th November 2010

Signature:



Andrea Valova, Chairperson