

# **Enrolment Policy**

**St. Gabriel's N.S.**

**Cowper St.**

**Dublin 7**

**Roll Number 20035H**

*Revised August 2013*

## **Enrolment Policy of St. Gabriel's N.S.**

The Board of Management of St. Gabriel's N.S. is setting its policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998. The Board of Management trust that by doing so parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management (BoM) Donald O'Meara c/o St. Gabriel's N.S., and the Principal Ms. Marion Mc Loone, St. Gabriel's N.S., will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

In light of recent decisions of the Supreme Court,<sup>i</sup> High Court<sup>ii</sup> and the Equality Tribunal,<sup>iii</sup> Boards of Management have been advised to review their enrolment policies. The existing policy was reviewed by staff members at staff meetings during March and May 2011. It was sent to Archbishop's House in June for approval of the Patron. Amendments were made in line with suggestions from Archbishop's House.

In August 2013, due to the number of applications received at that time for September 2014, the Board of Management reviewed and amended the closing date for applications.

### **Mission Statement**

St. Gabriel's N.S. is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

Our aims in St. Gabriel's N.S., in keeping with the our Catholic ethos, are that our pupils develop a positive attitude towards learning, that they develop self-esteem, respect for themselves and others and achieve their full potential in a safe and happy environment.

The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith.

The school welcomes children of all faiths and none. (Please see **Enrolment Criteria**).

Other relevant policies to be considered in conjunction with this policy include the school's *Code of Behaviour* and the *Health and Safety Policy*.

### **Rationale**

This policy exists to (a) assist parents/guardians in making an informed decision in relation to child enrolment and (b) comply with legislation and Department of Education and Skills (DES) circulars.

## **Aims**

Within the context and parameters of DES regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society

## **General Information**

Name: St. Gabriel's N.S.

Address: Cowper St., Dublin 7

Phone: 01-83848583

Fax: 01-83848583

Website: [stgabrielsns.ie](http://stgabrielsns.ie)

E-mail: [stgabrielsns.ias@eircom.net](mailto:stgabrielsns.ias@eircom.net)

St. Gabriel's N.S. is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

There are 15 teachers including the Principal, 8 mainstream class teachers, 4 Learning Support/Resource teachers, 1 Language Support teachers, a Home School Community Liaison teacher (HSCL) and 5 Special Needs Assistants (SNA).

This is a mixed school with the full range of classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. Children with special educational needs receive additional support from the LS/Resource teacher on a withdrawal basis and/or through in class support. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported by the Language Support teacher. Team teaching/in class support is practiced in every class.

A number of initiatives have been adopted in the school to allow each child reach their academic potential including Reading Hours, Ready Set Go Maths, Maths Recovery, Reading Recovery, DEAR (Silent Reading time) and maths games. We also have access to a play therapist, Life Skills Coach, SCP Project Worker and NEPS Psychologist. We work closely with CAMHS, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists in identifying and assessing children

in need of additional support and in providing such support. A number of extra-curricular activities are offered in the school.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the *Education Act* (1998).

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the DES. We also receive funding from the School Completion Programme.

## **Application Procedure**

There are two parts to the application process. First an application form should be submitted to the school office and then the parents of the child must attend an enrolment meeting.

Parents/Guardians who wish to enrol their child in the school are required to complete an application form (*See attached Application Form at Appendix 1*). Application forms can be requested by calling to the office in person or by telephoning or e-mailing the school. An application is not complete until all the requested information and documentation (ie: Birth Certificate, Baptismal Certificate, reports from any professional who works or has worked with the child eg: Speech and language therapist, social worker, previous school etc...) has been received and an enrolment meeting in the school has been attended.

Application forms should be submitted by the **31<sup>st</sup> October** of the year prior to year the child is due to start school. Enrolment meetings to complete applications received by 31<sup>st</sup> October will be held in November.

The school will require parents to confirm in writing that the *Code of Behaviour* is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.<sup>iv</sup>

Admission of Junior Infants normally takes place on the first day of the academic year. Any child who has not reached his/her fourth birthday cannot be enrolled at any time.<sup>v</sup>

## **Decision Making**

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school in accordance with school policy. Having regard to the school's enrolment policy, children will be enrolled on application, provided that there is space available.

On receipt of a completed application, including attendance by the parents/guardians at an enrolment meeting, a written decision will be given to said applicant within 21 days.

## **Enrolment Criteria**

On the 31<sup>st</sup> October, in the event of the school being oversubscribed due to excessive parental demand for places, the priority order in which children will be accepted will be as follows:

- Catholic children living within the parish boundary and sisters and/or brothers of pupils currently in the school
- Catholic children living outside the parish boundary who do not have a Catholic school within their own parish boundary
- Other children living within the parish boundary
- Other children living outside the parish boundary
- Children of current staff, including ancillary staff

In the event that there are more applicants within any category than there are available places, priority will be given to children within the particular category in order of age, starting with the oldest.

Applications made for enrolment after the 31<sup>st</sup> October of the year prior to the year the child is due to begin school will be accepted on a first come, first served basis.

An educational establishment does not discriminate if it admits children of one particular religious denomination in preference to others, or if it refuses to admit a child who is not of that denomination, provided any such refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.<sup>vi</sup>

## **Enrolment of Children with Special Needs**

St. Gabriel's N.S. endeavours at all time to practice the school policy of inclusion and welcomes applications from children with special needs. The same criterion for enrolment applies to children with special needs as applies to other children.

In order to assist the school in establishing the educational and physical needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required, the school requests that the parents/guardians of the child (a) informs the school of any special needs as early as possible in the enrolment process and (b) ensures that a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report(s) are provided to the school. Where such a report is not available, a request should be made so that the child would be assessed immediately. Following receipt of the report, the Board of Management will assess how the school can meet the needs specified therein. Where the Board of Management deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the DES and/or the HSE to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological or medical report. These resources may include:

- A visiting teacher service

- A resource teacher for children with special needs
- A Special Needs Assistant (SNA)
- Assistive technology
- Specialized equipment
- Furniture
- Transport, escort services and building adaptation where possible

The Principal may in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) or DES inspector meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If necessary, a full case-conference involving all parties may be held.

### **Refusal to enrol on grounds of 'Exceptional Circumstances'**

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment of a child in the following exceptional circumstances:

- 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 and/or
- In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff and/or school property.

### **Right of Appeal**

Parents/Guardians will be informed in writing by the Principal within 21 days of the Board of Management decision not to enrol their child and inform them of their right to appeal this decision.

Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* provides for a right of appeal against a decision to refuse enrolment (The procedure is set out on the DES website 'www.education.ie' and in DES circular 22/2002).

The Principal in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management has responsibility for preparing a response for the Appeals Committee if and when an appeal is initiated.

### **Pupil Transfer**

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time subject to the school's enrolment policy and available space.

### **Code of Behaviour**

Children enrolled in St. Gabriel's N.S. are required to co-operate with all school policies in relation to curriculum, organization and management.

The school will require parents to confirm in writing that the *Code of Behaviour* (See Appendix 2, *Code of Behaviour of St. Gabriel's N.S.*) is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.<sup>vii</sup>

## **Review**

This policy will be monitored by the staff and Board of Management of the school and reviewed at a staff meeting in May 2014 and at the following Board of Management meeting.

## **Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

## **Communication/Circulation of Policy**

Copies of this policy will be issued in hard copy on request of parents/guardians. This policy is available to view on the school's website [www.stgabrielsns.ie](http://www.stgabrielsns.ie).

Signed on behalf of Board of Management: *Donald O'Meara*

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

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<sup>i</sup> It should be noted that the DES has commenced initial preparatory work for developing a regulatory framework for enrolment.

<sup>ii</sup> *Board of Management of St. Molaga's National School –v- The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science and Others* [Appeal No: 234/2009] partially heard

<sup>iii</sup> *Stokes v Christian Brothers High School Clonmel* DEC-S210-056 (subject to appeal)

<sup>iv</sup> Section 23(4) of the *Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*

<sup>v</sup> Rule 64 of the *Rules for National School* and DES Primary Circular 24/2002

<sup>vi</sup> Section 7(3)(c) *Equal Status Act, 2000*

<sup>vii</sup> Section 23(4) of the *Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*