



O'Brennan NS

Admissions Policy

Admission Policy of O'Brennan National School

School Address: Kielduff, Tralee, Co Kerry

Roll number: 17646T

School Patron/s: Bishop Ray Browne

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 10th January 2023. 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 O' Brennan National School 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

O'Brennan National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Kerry.

"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, a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (b) including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; 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 O'Brennan 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.

3. Admission Statement

O Brennan National School 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, 'gender ground', 'civil status ground', 'family status ground', 'sexual orientation ground', 'religion ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'ground of race' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Additional information must be included (as applicable) in this section

- O Brennan National School 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.
- O Brennan National School 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.

School with special education class(es)

- O Brennan National School is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

In the case of special schools and schools with a special class or unit attached, the category/categories of SEN catered for by the school/special class/unit must be set out here.

(a) In the case of a mainstream school with a SEN class attached

O Brennan National School with the approval of the Minister for Education, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism.

Note for schools: The act does not require schools and special classes providing for a category or categories of special educational needs to change their current status. The current arrangements in relation to the category or categories of special educational needs provided by schools will continue as in previous years unless otherwise directed by the NCSE or the Department.

5. 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

Additional information must be included (as applicable) in this section.

School with special education class(es)

The special class attached to O Brennan National School provides an education exclusively for students with Autism and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

6. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

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:

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1. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address), priority eldest;
2. Children residing in the parish & traditional catchment area, priority eldest;
3. Children of staff members, priority eldest ;
4. Children of past pupils of the school, priority eldest (applied to maximum 25% of places set out in schools annual admission notice)
5. Random selection (independently verified).

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

In cases such as these O'Brennan National School will give priority to eldest in accordance with the above criteria.

If this criteria cannot determine who the place or places should go to (e.g. children with the same date of birth) a coin toss will be used to determine which child / children get the place/places.

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:

Points (a) to (g) must be included here by all schools. There are limited exceptions to some of these (highlighted in red below) and schools must retain the exceptions that apply to them and delete those that do not:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
(i) an early intervention class, or

(II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;

(b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school; (other than in relation to a fee charging school or a plc or further education and training course run by a school in respect of those courses)

(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; (other than in the case of admission to the residential element of a boarding school or to a plc or further education and training course run by a school)

(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.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

(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).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to O'Brennan 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 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 16 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 O'Brennan National School, 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.

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 O'Brennan National School 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.

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 board 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 O'Brennan 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 O'Brennan National School 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.

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:

Such applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis but will normally only be considered for admission on the first day of each new term unless the applicant is newly resident in the area.

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:

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of O'Brennan 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.

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.

17. 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)/guardian(s) of the student, 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, 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.

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.

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.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of O'Brennan National School on 16th January 2023

Signed: Anne O'Sullivan Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Michelle White Principal

The contents of this policy have been approved by St. Senan's Education Office, acting on behalf of the Patron.



O'Brennan National School

ASD Class Policy

Class for Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

The decision to provide a special class for children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder in O'Brennan National School was taken by the Board of Management of the school in conjunction with the Principal and Staff in October 2021. The decision was taken with a view to provide an education in a mainstream setting for children who have an Autistic Spectrum Disorder and who fulfil the enrolment criteria. The decision was taken primarily to cater for children resident in the parish of Ballymacelligott. The Board of Management notes that it is open to any primary school to set up such a class. O'Brennan National School is a mainstream co-educational primary school with an enrolment of approximately 187 pupils. O'Brennan National School has a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Kerry.

The ASD class at O'Brennan National School is a class for children with ASD who have been recommended for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream primary school and who have the potential to integrate into a mainstream, age-appropriate class. All placements will be reviewed annually in order to ensure that the placement continues to be appropriate for each child. The maximum class size is 6 pupils. Access to speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy etc. will be dependent on local H.S.E. services.

Our Aims

We aim to offer a positive meaningful educational experience, which allows the child to develop to his/her full learning potential in an environment that offers clarity, predictability and calm.

Our ASD class offers an autism specific learning environment within a mainstream co-educational national school. This setting facilitates optimum inclusion in mainstream education as part of the school community as appropriate, with regard to levels of general learning disability, resources and suitability for such inclusion.

We wish to provide a broad curriculum which focuses on the abilities and strengths of each child while supporting their areas of need.

Application Procedure for Enrolment

1. Enrolment Application Forms for the ASD Class will be accepted until the closing date for submission of enrolment applications which is the **14th February annually**. All applications will be placed on a Waiting List in order of the date of receipt of completed Enrolment

Application Form for the ASD Class. Applications received on or before this date will be acknowledged within one calendar month of the closing day for the submission of applications.

Requests for Enrolment Application Forms for the ASD Class and queries regarding supporting documentation should be made to: Principal, O'Brennan National School, Kielduff, Tralee Co. Kerry. Telephone: 0667137448. *Receipt of acknowledgement of an enrolment O'Brennan National School ASD Class application by the school does not constitute an offer of a place nor does it not guarantee a place in the school. It is simply the recording of an application for admission to our school. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with our enrolment policy.*

The Enrolment Application must be accompanied by all of the following supporting documentation supplied by parents:

- The child must have a diagnosis of Autism / Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-IV/V or ICD 10 by the psychologist or team.
- Original birth certificate.
- A written psychological assessment /report (dated within the six months prior to the Application being submitted) or a written report from a multi-disciplinary team must be provided. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Social Worker and a Physiotherapist. Please note all reports in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team.
- There must be a recommendation by the relevant professionals in the report that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child. In this regard it should be noted that the academic ability of the child will be taken into account when considering an application and will be subject to continuous assessment and review.

2. All applications received by the closing date will be considered by the Admissions Team. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. The team will include the School Principal, Deputy Principal/Special Needs Coordinator and a Special Class Teacher. The Admissions Team may seek the advice of the school's allocated NEPS psychologist.

The function of the admissions teams is to:

- Ascertain how many places are to be filled in the ASD Class. The maximum number of pupils in the class will be 6 pupils.
- Review all applications and all documentation relevant to a child applying for a place in the ASD class

- Verify the class's suitability in meeting the needs of the child
- Verify that there is a recommendation from a psychologist for placement in a special class in a mainstream school.
- Verify the suitability of the child for potential meaningful integration in an age-appropriate mainstream class
- Verify that the child is 4 years old on or before September 1st on the year of enrolment
- Verify that the child has an intelligence score in the Average or Low Average range (a Full-Scale Intelligence Quotient score of 75 or greater) when compared to other children of a similar age.
- Identify qualifying applicants with reference to these criteria. Ennis National School ASD Class
- Prioritise each qualifying applicant with reference to selection criteria (Point 3 below)
- To make a recommendation based on these findings to the Board of Management

The Board of Management is responsible for and must respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular the children already enrolled. The Board of Management has the right to endorse or overrule any decision made by the Admissions Team. In particular, The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment if they believe the school cannot meet the needs of a particular child.

3. In the event that the number of children that apply for a place is greater than the number of places, such places will be filled on review of Enrolment Applications received in the following order of priority:

- a. Siblings of current pupils of the school
- b. Children of current school staff
- c. Children living within Ballymacelligott parish
- d. Children living outside Ballymacelligott parish

In the event of the number of children in any category exceeds the number of places available, qualifying applicants will be offered a place in accordance with a 'first come, first served' basis as per the Waiting List.

4. All unsuccessful qualifying applicants will be placed on the Placement List, in accordance with the above criteria for places that may become available. All

unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 within 42 days from the date of the decision by the Board of Management. The Placement List is valid for vacancies which occur in the current school year only. All applications will be reviewed with reference to the selection criteria in February each year.

5. Parents who are offered a place must complete and return our regular Enrolment Registration Form within two weeks of the letter of offer to accept a placement. If the school does not receive the Registration Form within the two-week period, the place will be offered to the next child on the Placement List for that school year.

Pupils Transferring

Pupils may transfer to the ASD class during the school year subject to availability of places. Pupils transferring must enter the same class level that they are leaving, and have the necessary diagnosis and recommendations as outlined above.

Placement

1. After placement in the class a relevant Individual Education Plan will be provided for the child. This plan will have an input from all parties involved with the education of the child. The ASD Class teacher is only obliged to produce one IEP per school year. It is up to the professional opinion of the teacher involved if the IEP needs to be updated more frequently.

2. Each child in the A.S.D. class will be assigned to an age-appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes provided that this is in the best interests of the child, while having due regard to the educational benefit of all pupils enrolled in our school. Every opportunity will be used to promote inclusion in mainstream classes provided the child is ready for this step and has the necessary supports in place.

3. A review will take place at the end of the child's first year to assess whether the child's placement is appropriate.

- The review will be carried out by school staff with parental involvement
- The outcome of the review will be examined by the Board of Management
- If in the event that a placement is inappropriate, the school will liaise with appropriate agencies in an effort to obtain a more suitable placement

Behaviour

It is accepted that children with special educational needs may display difficult, defiant or oppositional behaviours. All efforts will be made by the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the child's Individual Education Plan. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the

other children in the class to the extent that their constitutional right to an education is being interfered with as judged by the Board of Management of the School, the school reserves the right to advise parents that a more suitable setting should be found for their child.

Discharge

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the classroom once they have reached the age of thirteen. It will be deemed compulsory that the year that the student turns 13 will be their last year. Pupils who reach the age of thirteen after September 30th in any year will be permitted to complete that academic year. This means a June discharge in the following year. The onus will be on the parents to negotiate the placement with a suitable secondary school. O'Brennan National School will facilitate all transfer of records/reports as well as assist with any information required with regards to the student and O'Brennan National School will be deemed to have authority to forward all relevant reports and assessments to the Secondary school unless specifically instructed in writing not to do so. Discharge may also be recommended after the first and/or any subsequent year if following psychological assessments and consultation with the parents/guardians, it is felt that the placement is no longer appropriate and serves the best interest of the child. The Board of Management has the right to overrule any decision made in this regard.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of O'Brennan National School on 16th January 2023

Signed: Anne O'Sullivan Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Michelle White Principal