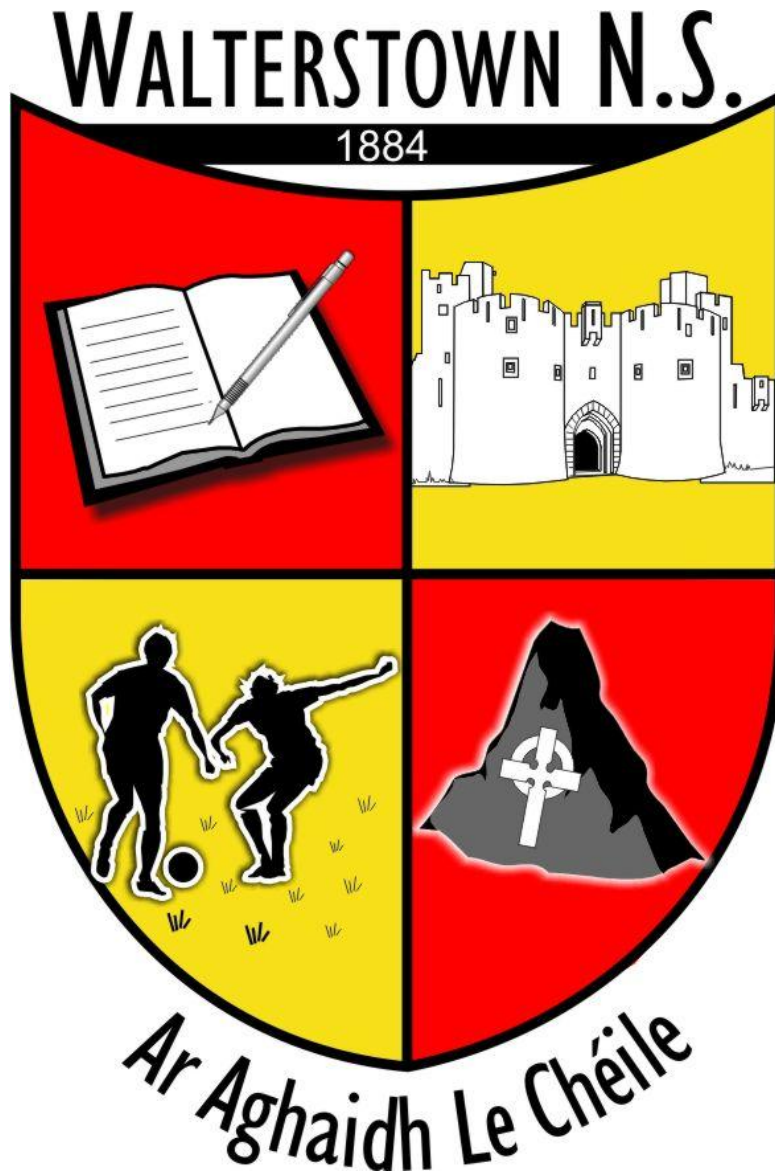


Admission Policy





This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Walterstown National School. It is intended to help the school community to understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

Version	Description	Authors
September 2020	Review of existing policy & format	Board of Management

School Contact Details

Principal: Mr. Rory O' Sullivan

Board of Management Chairperson: Mr. Damian Ahern

School Roll No: 12281D

School Patron: Cloyne

School Phone Number: 021-4812625

School email address: office@walterstownns.ie

Address: Walterstown N.S., Walterstown, Cobh, Co. Cork.



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 in September 2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Walterstown NS 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

Walterstown NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Cloyne.

“Catholic Ethos” in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference. In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Walterstown NS 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.

Walterstown NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of William Crean. “Catholic Ethos” in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church.

The school ethos is based on respect for religious and moral values. We emphasise intellectual development, embracing moral, social, emotional, physical and intellectual training. In working



to create a school where each child will feel happy and secure we acknowledge and value highly the support and assistance which parents give us in realising our aims. Close cooperation between school and home is the key to ensuring that the maximum educational benefits which the school offers are the prerogative of every pupil.

Mission Statement

Walterstown NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school which aims to provide a fruitful, ordered, inclusive climate of learning in which the personal development of each pupil is nurtured to its unique potential. The school strives to provide pupils with an excellent education, which embodies high academic standards allied to a broad range of experiences. Self-Esteem is fostered and mutual respect is encouraged in a Christian, caring atmosphere. For Roman Catholic pupils, formation in the faith is an integral part of school. The school hopes to enhance the quality of life of its pupils by endeavouring to provide for their educational needs and by identifying and encouraging their interest and talents.

In our school we strive to:

- Provide an excellent educational experience for all our pupils
- Provide a space where children can achieve high academic standards to the best of their ability
- Ensure we meet the needs of every child
- Ensure every child receives a broad range of experience outside of the academic areas
- Identify and encourage the interests and talents of each child
- To create a climate of active and engaging learning
- Create an inclusive environment that prioritises happiness
- Nurture the personal development of each pupil to their unique potential
- We also promote a multi-cultural ethos and a respect for difference. We cater for pupils of all faiths and none.

3. Admission Statement

Walterstown NS will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the sex or 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.

Walterstown NS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school

4. Special Classes

Walterstown NS is a school which has established Special Classes for pupils with Autism called Le Chéile, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of ASD in the Mild General Learning ability range specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the Special Class

Walterstown NS with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders in the Mild General Learning Range. These classes will prepare pupils to integrate into the mainstream school setting. If an application proceeds it must include a diagnostic/ psychological report with a recommendation for an ASD class attached to a mainstream school.

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
- c) Walterstown NS is a Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
- d) The special class attached to Walterstown NS provides an education exclusively for students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders within the Mild General Learning Ability range 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. Parents are asked to openly engage with relevant agencies and professionals in a continued effort to ensure the child is in a suitable setting.



6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

Enrolment Criteria	
Priority	Criterion
1	Siblings of children currently enrolled – priority to eldest. *Definition of sibling includes step siblings resident at the same address.
2	Families whose primary residence is in the immediate areas of Cobh, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school. Priority to eldest.
3	Children of current teaching staff. Priority to eldest.
4	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. Priority to eldest.
5	All others, priority to the eldest applicant.

Special Class Enrolment Criteria	
Priority	Criterion
1	Children with an ASD diagnosis currently enrolled in the school
2	Children with an ASD diagnosis who have brothers, sisters(including step-siblings and siblings of past pupils) resident at the same address as children already enrolled
3	Children with an ASD diagnosis whose home address is closest to our school within our catchment area (proof of address will be required)

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 the event of a tie a Lottery system will be used to allocate places. Names will be put into a hat and chosen by the Principal. This process will be witnessed by a member of the Parent's Association and a member of staff.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7) (e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service.
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;



- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
 - (a) a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned and/or
- (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 of a student having attended the school.
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school,

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Walterstown NS 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 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice but no later than 3 weeks after annual admissions process or for late applications, three weeks after the school receives an application.

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 Walterstown 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.

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 Walterstown 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 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 school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).



13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Walterstown NS 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 Walterstown 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.

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

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- a. Parents request application form.
- b. Parents complete and submit application form by due date either as in Notice or whatever timeline.
- c. Application is processed.
- d. Parents are notified within the timeframe – 3 weeks as per Annual Admission Notice/ or from date of application.
- e. Parents accept the place and accept & sign the school's Code of Behaviour.
- f. Parents may arrange a meeting with Principal prior to submitting an enrolment form.

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:

- a) Parents request application form.



- b) Parents complete and submit application form by due date either as in Notice or whatever is agreed.
- c) Application is processed.
- d) Parents notified within the timeframe – 3 weeks from date of application.
- e) Parents accept the place and accept & sign the school's Code of Behaviour.
- f) Parents may arrange a meeting with Principals prior to submitting an enrolment form.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Walterstown NS 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents have 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) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.



Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, 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.

Roles and Responsibility

All members of the school community, under the positive and supportive leadership of the Board of Management and Principal, have both a role and a responsibility in successfully implementing this policy. The policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis by the policy committee through feedback from members of the school community.

Implementation Date

This policy was implemented _____. Amendments will be implemented immediately.

Timetable for Review

This policy is to be reviewed during the school year _____.

Ratification and Communication

The amended policy will be communicated to members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting of the BOM on _____. Parents will be made aware in the next school communication that the policy is available for viewing on the school website.

Date of ratification: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____