

All other classes cease at: 2.35pm

Details of school holidays and closures are issued to Parents/Guardians in September.

The school offers a full range of mainstream classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class and an Early Start class. The school also offers two special classes for children with autism; a preschool and junior class.

The school is a Mixed School catering for boys and girls from 4 years to 12 years.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin is the Patron of the school.

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. Consequently school policy must have regard to the resources and funding available at any time.

Holy Family National School follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

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

- Inclusiveness for all children;
- 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.

The school has a Catholic ethos. In addition to Catholic religious education, Catholic values permeate all school activities. The Employment Equality Act 1997 safeguards the rights of schools of religious denominations to give priority to children of their particular denomination over children of other denominations. Accordingly, the Board of Management of Holy Family National School has decided that priority will be given to applications made on behalf of children whose parents are seeking an education in the Catholic ethos.

Application Procedure

The Board will communicate generally to the school community in October/November each year. Details of enrolment will be communicated through the school's newsletter, the parish bulletin, a church announcement, a letter and on the school's website. Applications for enrolment must be submitted before the end of January (in the intended year for starting junior infants).

- Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in Junior Infants in Holy Family N.S. are requested to return a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the office) with an original Baptismal Certificate (if applicable). This form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians.
- Telephone calls or personal school visits concerning enrolment may be facilitated, but are not in themselves enrolment applications.
- The School makes provision for late applications and these names will be placed on a waiting list.
- The completion of an application form or the placement of your child's name on a list, however early, does not confer an automatic right to a place in the school.
- Junior Infant applications will be processed and enrolments confirmed in the February (no more than 21 days after the closing date for enrolment) of the intended school year.
- Successful applicants will be informed in writing of their acceptance. Parents and guardians are required to confirm their acceptance of a place in the school for their child within two weeks of the letter of acceptance being issued. If the school does not receive confirmation the offer will cease and the enrolment is cancelled.
- Parents/Guardians will be invited to an Induction Day in the school in June.
- The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Skills' Rules for National Schools, which provides that pupils must be 4 years or over by September 1st on year of enrolment, although compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of six years.
- Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs & values, family or social circumstances.
- The Board of Management of Holy Family N.S. recognises the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice. However the Board reserves the right to determine the maximum number in each classroom; this determination will be based on the physical capacity of the building and Department of Education and Skills directives on class size.

In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class/standard exceeding the number of places available the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment:

- (a) Catholic children living in the parish and brothers and sisters (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address) of current pupils
- (b) Siblings of past pupils
- (c) Catholic children living outside the parish who do not have a Catholic school in their own parish
- (d) Other children living in the parish who are not Catholic
- (e) Other children living outside the parish who are Catholic or of other faiths
- (f) If the applications within categories exceed the number of places available, older children will be given precedence

The Board of Management strongly recommends that applicant children are at least four years of age on or before June 30th of the school commencement year.

Enrolment of children with Special Needs.

In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs it is open to the Board to request a copy of the child's medical/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, to request that the child be assessed immediately.

The purpose of this assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following the receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school will meet the needs specified in the report. Where it is deemed that further resources are required, prior to enrolment, the Department of Education and Skills will be requested to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological or medical report. Such resources may include e.g. access to or the provision of a combination of the following;

- a. Visiting teacher service
- b. Resource teacher for special needs.
- c. Special Needs Assistant.
- d. Specialised equipment or furniture.
- e. Transport Service.
- f. Other as required.

The school Principal will meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held which may include parents, principal, class teacher, learning support teacher and resource teacher or psychologist as appropriate.

Exceptional Circumstances

The school reserves the right to refuse or accept enrolment for a pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where for example:

- a. The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/ or provide the pupil with an appropriate education.
- b. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk, to other pupils, to themselves, to school staff or to school property.

Pupils Transferring

While recognising the rights of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school, community and in particular, the children already enrolled. Assisting the school in such circumstances the Board of Management will take into account:

- The transfer is in accordance with the school's admission policy.
- The B.O.M. will have regard for the eligibility of a child based on the relevant conditions prescribed by the DES concerning class size, staff provisions, physical space, health and welfare of children.
- The school is satisfied with the reasons for the transfer and that it is in the best interest of the child.
- All reports relating to the child are presented when application for a transfer is made.
- In certain instances the approval of D.E.S. will be required.
- The Board reserves the right to refuse an application for admission, in exceptional circumstances, as stated previously in this policy.
- Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate with and support the School/Board of Managements' Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies

on curriculum, organisation & management. The BOM places Parent/Guardians responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way.

Children of other faiths or no faith

Bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made so that the school is as inclusive as possible. While Catholic education and the ethos of the school permeates the day, children of other faiths or none, where a request is made in writing, will be excused from attendance at formal religious instruction classes and specifically Catholic liturgies. As far as possible, in consultation with parents, suitable alternative arrangements will be made in order to facilitate this. It will not be possible, however to provide religious instruction in other faiths.

Appeals Procedure

In line with Section 28 of the Education Act 1998, parents who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed, in writing to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal, and lodged within ten days of receiving the refusal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act on the official form provided by the Department. An appeal form will be issued by the school to the parents / guardians. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of the refusal from the school to enrol.

Addendum :

The Enrolment of Children in Horizons, Special Classes for children with Autism

- Each child must have a full current Psychological & Cognitive Assessment, which must specify a diagnosis of **Autism/ASD** using **DSMV or ICD10** and a specific recommendation for a special class placement in a mainstream school from a qualified professional/professionals.
- The child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism / Autistic Spectrum Disorder without significant intellectual impairment made using the DSM-V or ICD 10 by the psychologist or a member of the Multi-Disciplinary Team. If the child also presents with a general learning disability, it must fall within the mild range (this diagnosis must also be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure). In the event of an application being made to

enrol in the Early Intervention Class where a child is deemed, by a psychologist, to be too young to undergo IQ testing as part of the cognitive assessment the enrolment will be kept under review until such time as this score is available.

- The parents/guardians must fill in and return a School Enrolment form as for all pupils.
- All relevant reports and assessments must be given to the school prior to the child enrolling. The withholding of reports may invalidate an enrolment.
- The Board of Management's enrolment policy states that the school accommodates two classes for children with Autism, class for children of school going age and a pre-school (early intervention) class.
- The Department of Education & Skills states that the ratio for each class is a maximum six pupils to one teacher and two SNAs. There must be more than three pupils to access the second SNA.
- This policy states that the parents/guardians (and the prospective candidates for the class if required) must meet the principal, the class teacher and any other relevant parties before the child starts school. A meeting of new parents will be held prior to commencement in the school, as with all pupils.
- The classes will be co-educational and will cater for children of Pre-school and Primary School age only – i.e. three/four years to thirteen years. Where appropriate a pre-school placement may be offered to children until the age of six years on June 30th of the year of exit. A starting age of three years has been set by the board of Management.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment in exceptional circumstances, as outlined previously in this policy. The Board also reserves the right to suspend or expel a child under '*Health & Safety*' regulations and in conjunction with the school's '*Code of Behaviour*' as per the National Education Welfare document if the need arises.
- All placements are subject to review at the request of the parents and/ or the school. The review will include input from all agencies involved, the parents/guardians and the school. Following the review a recommendation may be made that the child be enrolled in a school that can meet his/her needs.
- The Principal implements the enrolment policy on behalf of the Board of Management.

- First preference for enrolment will be given to pupils attending Holy Family National School (as per admissions criteria). Thereafter, siblings of current and past pupils will be considered for enrolment and following that, enrolment will be on a first come first served basis.

Review

This policy will be reviewed yearly at the September meeting of the Board of Management.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 03/02/2016.

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the Board of Management