

St Bernadette's Junior School
Quarryvale, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.
Tel (01) 6263188 Fax (01) 6261865
E-mail: stbjns@gmail.com
Roll Number: 19743E.



Principal: Dónal Ward
Deputy Principal: Noirin Kenny

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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 the 8th of July 2020. It will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St. Bernadette's JNS 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 will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St. Bernadette's JNS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Archdiocese of Dublin.

"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 St. Bernadette's JNS 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.

St. Bernadette's JNS Mission Statement

In St. Bernadette's JNS children are central to all we do. We provide a happy, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment. Our aim is to help the children in our care achieve their potential both as learners and as unique individuals. We take a holistic approach to education. We cater for the physical, academic, social, emotional and spiritual needs of the children. This approach includes a strong focus on literacy, numeracy, the arts, and physical and mental well-being.

St. Bernadette's JNS is a Catholic school. We are guided by Christian values. St. Bernadette's JNS is an inclusive school. We welcome children of all abilities, faiths and belief systems. We respect and celebrate difference.

We recognise parents as the primary educators of their children. We work in partnership with parents towards creating a school community which nurtures children based on a vision of inclusion and achieving potential.

3. Admission Statement

St. Bernadette's JNS 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, '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.

St. Bernadette's JNS 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.

St. Bernadette's JNS 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.

St. Bernadette's JNS 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.

St. Bernadette's JNS is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, 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

St. Bernadette's JNS with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

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

St. Bernadette's JNS is a Roman Catholic and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special class attached to St. Bernadette's JNS provides an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) 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 (see Application Procedure for Special Class).

For the Application Procedure for Early Start and Mainstream please see Appendix 1

For the Application procedure for special class (for children with ASD) please see Appendix 2

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:

Selection Criteria for Early Start:

- I. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in St. Bernadette's Schools and children resident in Rowlagh/Quarryvale Parish.
- II. Children of Staff
- III. If there is still a place available, any other child seeking to enrol taking account of DES guidelines on class sizes.

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:

Admission shall be granted on the basis of oldest children first. Should two children in the same criteria have the same date of birth selection will be by draw by an independent person.

Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places a waiting list shall be drawn up following the above criteria (see Section 13 below).

Selection Criteria for mainstream:

- I. Children who attend St. Bernadette's Junior School Early Start and are;
 - a) Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in St. Bernadette's Schools
 - b) Resident in Rowlagh/Quarryvale Parish.(Both a and b have equal ranking)
- II. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in St. Bernadette's Schools and children resident in Rowlagh/Quarryvale Parish.
- III. Children who have attended St. Bernadette's Junior School Early Start but who do not meet point I above.
- IV. Children of staff
- V. If there is still a place available, any other child seeking to enrol taking account of DES guidelines on class sizes.

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:

Admission shall be granted on the basis of oldest children first. Should two children in the same criteria have the same date of birth selection will be by draw by an independent person.

Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places a waiting list shall be drawn up following the above criteria (see Section 13 below).

Selection Criteria for Acceptance to Special Class

(All Children applying to the special class must meet the Special Needs Criteria outlined in Appendix 2.)

- I. Children who attend St. Bernadette's Junior School (Mainstream).
- II. Children who attend St. Bernadette's Junior School Early Start and are;
 - a) Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in St. Bernadette's Schools
 - b) Resident in Rowlagh/Quarryvale Parish.(Both a and b have equal ranking)
- III. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in St. Bernadette's Schools and children resident in Rowlagh/Quarryvale Parish.
- IV. Children who have attended St. Bernadette's Junior School Early Start and reside in Dublin 22 but who do not meet points I – III.
- V. Children who have attended St. Bernadette's Junior School Early Start but who do not meet point I - IV.
- VI. Children of staff
- VII. Children who do not meet points I - VI but reside in Dublin 22.
- VIII. If there is still a place available, any other child seeking to enrol taking account of DES guidelines on class sizes

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:

Spaces shall be granted by consultation with the BOM where priority will be given to pupils at the same class level(s) as existing pupils in the special class. If two or more pupils continue to be tied (i.e. all at most suitable class level), priority shall be granted by oldest children first (in the most suitable class level).

Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places a waiting list shall be drawn up following the above criteria (see Section 13 below).

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, including naíonraí, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at St. Bernadette's JNS early start pre-school;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to 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;
- (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 siblings of a student attending or having attended the school;
- (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 St. Bernadette's JNS 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.

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 St. Bernadette's JNS, 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 St. Bernadette's JNS 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 St. Bernadette's JNS 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. A separate waiting list will be compiled for: Mainstream, Early Start and Special Classes.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Bernadette's JNS 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 added to this waiting list. These additions to the waiting list will be made in accordance with the criteria in section 6.

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. This waiting list will remain in operation until the day before admission period. All applicants on the waiting list will need to reapply during a new admission period.

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:

Subject to there being places available in the relevant classes, and acceptance of the school's code of behaviour - on basis of selection criteria below:

- I. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in St. Bernadette's Schools and children resident in Rowlagh/Quarryvale Parish.
- II. Children of Staff
- III. Any other child seeking to enrol

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:

Subject to there being places available in the relevant classes and acceptance of the school's code of behaviour:

-on basis of order of application

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

The board of St. Bernadette's JNS 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.

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, 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 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. This request must be received by the board within three weeks of the issuance of the letter informing the parent that the student has not been offered a place.

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. This request must be received by the board within three weeks of the issuance of the letter informing the parent that the student has not been offered a place.

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.

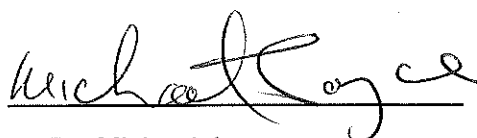
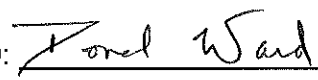
An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

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 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.

SIGNED:  SIGNED: 
Dr. Michael Joyce Dónal Ward

Chairperson, Board of Management
DATE: 15/12/22

Principal
DATE: 15/12/22,

Appendix 1

Application Procedure for Early Start and Mainstream

Children being enrolled in Early Start should be three years of age on commencing Early Start. Children enrolling in Junior Infants should be four years of age on commencing school. Parents wishing to enrol their child in St. Bernadette's Junior School should call to the school at the specified time in February. This time is notified to parents in the Admissions Notice. At enrolment, parents will be asked to provide specific information regarding their child including:

- Pupils' name, age, address and Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number)
- Names and addresses of parents / guardians
- Contact phone numbers for children's parents / guardians
- Emergency phone numbers
- The religion of the child
- Previous schools or pre-schools attended
- Acceptance that their children's behaviour will conform with the Code of Behaviour of the School.
- Any medical conditions which the school should be aware of
- Any other relevant information (including any such other information as may be prescribed under the Education Welfare Act 2000)
- Permission to share personal data with third parties, including other Government bodies. This includes the Department of Education and Skills, NCSE, TUSLA, An Garda Síochána, HSE, NEPS, SCP, EWO, other schools to which pupils transfer to.

Appendix 2

Application procedure for special class (for children with ASD)

All procedures in Appendix 1 apply for enrolment in the special class, in addition:

- Each child must have a full current Psychological & Cognitive Assessment, which must specify a diagnosis of Autism/ASD using DDSMV 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 with the mild range (this diagnosis must also be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure).
- The Department of Education & Skills states that the ratio for each class is a maximum of six pupils to one teacher and two special needs assistants. There must be more than three pupils to access the second special needs assistant.
- The classes will be co-educational and will cater for children from Junior Infants to second class only i.e. the child will be dually enrolled in an age appropriate mainstream class. Their education in St. Bernadette's Junior National School will finish upon the completion of second class.
- All placements are subject to review at the request of 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.