



## **Admission Policy of Newtown Junior School**

**School Address: Lower Newtown**

**Roll number: 20261Q**

**School Patron/s: Friends Patron Company CLG Newtown Schools Patron Committee**

### **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 Newtown Junior School (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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 the School’s 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**

Newtown Junior School is a multi-denominational and co-educational Quaker national school providing primary education in Waterford and teaches classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, inclusive. The School was founded by the Munster Quarterly Meeting of the Society of Friends and is managed on behalf of the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland (Quaker). The Religious Society of Friends, as Patron,

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**NEWTOWN JUNIOR SCHOOL**

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School Roll Number 20261Q

believes that there is “that of God” in everyone. In everyday language, that is a belief in the worth and potential of every individual. The School places great importance on recognising and nurturing the particular strengths and talents of every pupil, with equal attention being paid to the behaviourally challenged and the under achiever.

The Quaker form of worship and church government are participatory and not authoritarian. This attitude permeates relationships throughout the school, with pupils being treated as responsible persons and encouraged to accept responsibility as they go through school, as a good preparation for life. Consideration for others, unselfishness and a community spirit are thus instilled.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Newtown Junior 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.

Our Mission:

Newtown Junior School strives to be a unique community where the potential and talent of each child is realised within a friendly and challenging community based on Quaker principles.

Our Aim:

- To encourage everyone to see that God is in themselves and others;
- To enable each child to meet creative, intellectual and physical challenges with confidence;
- To foster an active concern for the community and the environment; and
- To create a friendly atmosphere within which diversity is celebrated and supported and to create a secure and caring setting with known boundaries.

### **3. Admission Statement**

Newtown Junior 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, ‘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.

Newtown Junior School will co-operate 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.

Newtown Junior 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.

Newtown Junior School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Newtown Junior School 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 a member of the Religious Society of Friends and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

#### **4. 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.

#### **5. Procedure for admission of students to Junior Infants**

**5.1** Applications for places in Junior Infants will only be accepted during the timeframe specified in the school’s Annual Admission Notice. This Notice will be published annually on the school’s website at a date after the 1<sup>st</sup> October each year.

**5.2** Applications must be made on the school’s standard Application Form which will be available from the school’s website or from the school office.

**5.3** Only fully completed applications accompanied by the relevant supporting documentation will be considered. Supporting documentation include the applicant’s birth certificate and, for Priority Category 1 Applicants, the relevant Clerk’s letter.

## 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:

**Priority Category 1:** An applicant who is a Quaker or is a child of Quaker parents or guardians or Attenders. Evidence from the Applicant to support the statement that the Applicant Student is a Quaker or child of Quaker parents/guardians/Attenders will be required. This evidence will consist of letter from the Clerk of the relevant Meeting confirming the Applicant's status. An Attender is a person who attends Quaker Meetings regularly and participates in the Quaker community, both over a period of time, being not less than six months.

**Priority Category 2:** Applicants who are siblings (including step-siblings or foster siblings resident at the same address) of students currently or previously enrolled in Newtown Junior School;

**Priority Category 3:** Applicants who are children or grandchildren of former pupils of Newtown Junior School and of the original Junior School established in the early twentieth century, subject to a maximum of 25% of available places being made available to this category.

**All Priority Category 4:** other applicants.

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:

- applicants will be prioritised by the earlier date and time of birth of the applicant.

## 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;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (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;
- (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 those students listed in the selection criteria in the Priority Categories (see Section 6 above);

(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 Newtown Junior School for the school year concerned.

## **8. Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to Newtown Junior 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 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 Newtown Junior 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 Newtown Junior 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 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 of 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 the applicant
- (iv) the 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 Newtown Junior 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 Newtown Junior 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.

#### **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:**

Applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school receives the application. Applicant students will be offered a place in the relevant class if a place is available. In the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places in the relevant class, the school will apply the selection criteria set out in Section 6 of this policy to those applications. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

**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:**

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. Applicant students will be offered a place in the relevant class if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Newtown Junior 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.

## **17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

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)/guardians, 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.

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.

Unless otherwise specified by the Minister, applicants must request reviews by the Board of Management within three weeks of the date on which the school issues a refusal of admission.

### **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.