

# St. Raphaela's Primary School

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## Enrolment Policy

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### 1. Introduction and Mission Statement:

St. Raphaela's Primary School is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, and the Trusteeship of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

At St. Raphaela's Primary School we aim to create a safe and happy learning community in which the children in our care are given every opportunity to flourish academically, spiritually and morally, in accordance with the spirit of St. Raphaela Mary. While the religious education we provide is in accordance with the Christian traditions and practices of the Catholic Church, we respect and acknowledge the diverse beliefs, religions and ways of life of peoples of all faith backgrounds and none. Pupils of different faith backgrounds attend our school, and their beliefs are respected. The Catholic ethos of the school is inclusive and all pupils are equally welcome.

Our school caters for girls from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, we currently enrol two classes at each class level.

In addition to the Principal, there are currently seventeen mainstream class teachers and four Special Educational Teachers. Staffing allocation is subject to change from year to year depending on allocations made by the Department of Education and National Council for Special Education

The school is funded by grants from the Department of Education and Science, parental donations and regular fundraising. At St. Raphaela's we follow the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act. In addition to this the school delivers the Patron's Programme for Catholic Faith formation.

### 2. Rationale:

It is intended that this policy will provide clarity around the enrolment procedures in St. Raphaela's Primary School. It will also set out clearly the prioritisation process that will be adhered to where the demand for pupil places exceeds the number of places available.

This policy was developed by the Board of Management in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998), and Admissions to School Act (2018).

### 3. Application Procedure

Parents and Guardians seeking to enrol their daughter in St. Raphaela's Primary School must email their Registration of Interest Form (downloadable from [www.straphaelasns.ie](http://www.straphaelasns.ie) or via email from the school office) to [secretary@straphaelasns.ie](mailto:secretary@straphaelasns.ie)

Please note:

- Enrolment of Junior Infants takes place in the October of the year prior to entry (e.g. Junior Infant pupils for September 2020 will be enrolled in October of 2019).
- Pupils may transfer to St. Raphaela's N.S. during the school year, subject to the school policy, and space in the appropriate class level. Transfers after Term One are not normally accepted except in exceptional circumstances or where a child moves into the area with their family.
- Where there is no current availability, permission will be sought from the Parent / Guardian to wait-list the child's application. During March, the places for the following September (to all classes except Junior Infants) will be allocated by the School Principal.
- Acceptance of the offer of a place must be received in writing within 10 days (unless otherwise stated within the offer letter), and be accompanied by the completed Enrolment Form, Birth Certificate, and proof of address (utility bill), as well as any educational /medical reports which should be made available to the school. Enrolment is not complete until these have been received.
- Parents and Guardians will be asked to confirm in writing their acceptance of St. Raphaela's Code of Behaviour.

### 4. Equality of Access:

Equality of access is the key principle underpinning the enrolment policy of our school. The Board of Management will not refuse admission for reasons of religion, ethnicity, language, special educational needs, disability, traveller or refugee status, political beliefs or a family's socioeconomic circumstances.

However, while recognising the right of parents to apply for a place for their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management has a duty to respect the needs of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgments, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine, on an annual basis, the maximum number of children in *each* separate classroom and will consider such elements as: the available space in classrooms, educational needs of children of a particular age, the presence in particular class groups of pupils with special educational/behavioural needs, the availability of appropriate supports and resources, Department of Education guidelines regarding pupil: teacher ratio, (currently a maximum average of 26 children) and health and safety concerns regarding staff and children.

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed the number of places available, offers of places will be made in the following order:

1. Siblings of pupils currently enrolled in St. Raphaela's N.S. on the proposed date of entry of the applicant (including step/foster siblings, resident at the same address) and daughters of permanent members of staff employed in St. Raphaela's N.S.
2. Children living within the area of Stillorgan / Kilmacud, arranged by date of birth. Proof of residence (i.e. utility bill/ electoral register) will be sought. Please see Appendix A for the list of estates in Stillorgan / Kilmacud.
3. Children living outside Stillorgan / Kilmacud, by date of birth.

## 5. Enrolment Procedures for Junior Infant Applicants

The Board of Management accepts expressions of interest for enrolment to future Junior Infant Classes.

**This “Registration of Interest” is not an enrolment form.** Parents / Guardians interested in the school are asked to fully complete a “Registration of Interest” form available from the school website, which should be returned by email. When received by the school, the details of all applicants are then entered into school records.

Given the age profile of our current students, Parents / Guardians of applicants should ensure that *their child has attained their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday by, at latest, 30<sup>th</sup> April in the year of their admission.*

The Junior Infants Enrolment Procedures are as follows:

1. The child’s basic information will be kept on file in the school. At least 15 months before your child is due to start school (i.e. during the May of the year before) you will be sent an email to remind you of your registration of interest in the school, and to confirm any changes to relevant details (e.g. child’s requested year of entry, your current address).
2. All applicants will be invited to an Open Morning to view the school in the Autumn Term of the year preceding entry. After this day, enrolment of Junior Infants will usually take place in the October of the year prior to entry. Applicants who receive a place will be forwarded an “Enrolment Form” as well as the school’s current “Enrolment Policy” and Code of Behaviour, via email. Parents must return:
  - A fully completed hard copy of the Enrolment form (typed, or scanned signatures will not suffice)
  - Documents related to your child’s additional learning needs, either educational / medical (where relevant)
  - Proof of residence (Utility bill or copy of correspondence from a Government Department)
  - A copy of child’s Birth Certificate.

The Board of Management may also request additional documentation to verify any matter pertaining to the application. The Board of Management reserves the right to verify to its satisfaction any information submitted. False or misleading relevant information on a Registration of Interest form, or Enrolment form, will deem the application invalid.

3. Upon receipt of your Enrolment form, you will receive a “Confirmation of Receipt of Enrolment” via email.
4. In the event that an offered place is not accepted in writing within within 10 days (unless otherwise stated within the offer letter), the offer will be recorded as being declined and the place will be offered to the next child on the list.
5. Those who are not successful in getting a place in the school will be advised by email, that their child’s name will be placed on a waiting list.
6. The parents / guardians of pupils who accept a place in the school will be invited to an Induction Day with their daughter during May/June before their September start date.

It is the Parent / Guardian’s responsibility to notify the school of any change to their contact details or any material change which would affect their child’s enrolment (e.g. address).

Upon enrolment, Parents/Guardians must sign to accept the school’s ethos and **Code of Behaviour**. The Board of Management places responsibility on Parents/Guardians to ensure that their child co-operates with the School’s Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management, in an age-appropriate way. Failure to co-operate with said policies may result in suspension of a child. (see Code of Behaviour).

## **6. Enrolment Procedures for Senior Infant-Sixth Class Applicants**

For applications of enrolment to Senior Infants - Sixth Class, the following procedures have been established:

1. Parents / Guardians are asked to submit a “Senior Infants - Sixth Class: Registration of Interest Form” along with a cover email/letter to explain the request for transfer.
2. Applicants who receive a place will be forwarded an “Enrolment Form” as well as the school’s current “Enrolment Policy” and Code of Behaviour, via email. Parents must return:
  - A fully completed hard copy of the Enrolment form (typed, or scanned signatures will not suffice),
  - Documents related to your child’s additional learning needs (where relevant)
  - Proof of residence (Utility bill or copy of correspondence from a Government Department)
  - A copy of Birth Certificate.

The Board of Management may also request additional documentation to verify any matter pertaining to the application. The Board of Management reserves the right to verify to its satisfaction any information submitted. False or misleading relevant information on a Registration of Interest form, or Enrolment form, will deem the application invalid.

3. Children will not normally be enrolled during the school year after Term One, unless the child has moved into the area, or in exceptional circumstances.
4. Where the demand for places exceeds the number of places of enrolment available, a waiting list will be maintained.

As stated previously, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine, on an annual basis, the number of classes in the school. The allocation of children to individual classes is a matter for the Principal.

Where a Registration of Interest form has been wait-listed for more than three months, and a place becomes available within a class, the school may require the Parent / Guardian to confirm details within the application before a place of enrolment is made available to the pupil.

## **7. Enrolment of Children with Special Educational Needs**

The Board of Management of St. Raphaela’s N.S. supports the principle of inclusivity and applications to enrol on behalf of children with disabilities or other special educational needs will be processed as per the school’s Enrolment Policy

In cases where the applicant has special needs, the Board of Management requests that parents supply a copy of the child's medical and psychological report with their application to enable a prompt and informed decision regarding admission. Where such a report is not available, the Board requests that such a report be obtained, and the following may be requested:

- Medical history/reports in so far as it relates to the additional needs of the child that may impact upon their experience within a mainstream class setting
- Speech and Language Therapy Reports, where appropriate
- Psychological Reports: Clinical or Educational, where appropriate
- Other reports which relate to a child’s social, emotional, physical or educational wellbeing e.g. where a child has been seen by another agency or professional – social worker, occupational therapist, counsellor etc.

The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to her disability or special needs, and establish profile the support required. The school also requires this information to apply to the Department of Education and National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for the provision of support services required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological/medical report to ensure the child’s needs can be met within a mainstream classroom setting alongside her peers.

Such resources may include, but are not limited to, any combination of the following: supplementary teaching from a Special Education Teacher; access to a Special Needs Assistant for care needs if a child requires any one-to-one assistance throughout the day; specialised equipment or furniture etc. Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant including related needs of other pupils and staff, it will strive to secure those resources.

It is the responsibility of the parents of the child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment form. **In this context, the school will have equal regard for the welfare of all pupils.**

The Principal of the school will meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. Where necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held, which may include Parents, Principal, Special Education teacher, Special Needs Assistant and/or Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) as appropriate.

*Please note: The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has, in recent years, imposed a cut-off date for receipt of applications 6 months before the start of the school year. Therefore Parents should inform the school of their child's additional needs upon enrolment.*

### **8. Refusal to enrol**

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- The pupil having special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and/or NCSE, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education in the mainstream classroom setting.
- In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to the wellbeing (social, emotional, educational or safety) of the other pupils, school staff and/or school property.

### **9. Suspension and Expulsion.**

In accordance with the Department of Education & Skills' "Rules for National Schools (130)", and the obligations on St. Raphaela's Primary School's Board of Management under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (1989), and the guidelines as laid down by the National Educational Welfare Board, it may be necessary to temporarily or permanently exclude a pupil from the school. The procedure necessary for expulsion or for a suspension is set out in Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

**Suspension** will be enforced either after all minor sanctions have been exhausted, or as a response to a single breach of school discipline, where any lesser sanction would be inappropriate in the circumstances. In such circumstances, the Board of Management empowers the Principal to impose a suspension, and the Principal is required to inform the Board immediately.

**Expulsion** is seen as a last resort, and will only be enforced when all other sanctions have been exhausted and when the pupils and parents/guardians have been made aware, by notice in writing, that such action is being considered by the Board. In every case expulsion will be preceded by a suspension from school activities. The Board alone has the power to expel a pupil.

### **10. Right of Appeal**

Parents/Guardians, within Section 29 of the Education Act (1998), have the right to appeal decisions by the Board of Management in relation to enrolment or exclusion, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education on the official form provided by the Department. Further details of how to proceed with such an appeal are available from [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) or [www.newb.ie](http://www.newb.ie)

### **11. Review, Approval and Communication**

This policy was developed in line with legislative requirements, and received Patron Approval on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2018. It was formally approved by the Board of Management on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2018.

The revised policy will be made available on-line and will be issued in hard copy upon request via the school office. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or from time to time as required.

The -Chairperson of the Board of Management, Valerie Scully or School Principal, Laura Corry, can be contacted at through the school and will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy.

## Appendix A: Roads within Stillorgan / Kilmacud Area

Allen Park Drive and Road	Mount Anville Wood
Anville Drive	Myrtle Grove
Ard Lorcaín Estate	Oaktree Road
Beaufield Manor and Park	Orpen Close, Dale, Green, Hill, Rise
Brewery Road (1-12)	Patrician Villas
Cedermount Apartments	Rathmore Avenue
Cherrygarth	Redesdale Court and Crescent
Clonmore Road	Redesdale Road (1-27, 2-34)
Convent Court	Slieve Rua Drive
Coolnevaun	South Avenue (up to the roundabout)
Coppinger Close, Glade, Walk, Wood	St. Brigid's Church Road
Dale Close, Drive and Road	St. Kevin's Park
Ellesmere	St. Laurence's Park
Glenalbyn Road	Stillorgan Court
Hazel Avenue and Villas	Stillorgan and Ulster Terrace
Highridge Green	Stillorgan Heath
Kilmacud Avenue	Stillorgan Park Avenue
Kilmacud Par (& Upper Kilmacud Rd 1-7a)	Stillorgan Wood
Kilmacud Road Lower (26-188, 91-245)	St. Raphaela's Apartments
Kilmacud Road Upper (84-150, 101-205)	Sweetbriar Lane
Lakelands Avenue, Close, Crescent	Thornhill Road
Lakelands Drive, Grove, Lawn, Road	Waltersland Road
Lawnswood Park	Weirview Drive
Linden Lea Park	Wesbury Estate
Marsham Coart	Woodley Park, View, Pines
Merville Avenue and Road	Woodthorpe
	Woodview Court, House, Mews