

Admission Policy
St. Anne's School
2026 2027

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Admission Policy of St. Anne's School, Ennis, Co Clare

School Address: St Senan's Rd, Corrovorrin, Ennis, Co. Clare

Roll number: 194141

School Patron: The Bishop of Killaloe, Fintan Monahan

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 30th January 2026. 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 St. Anne's School 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.

An application pack 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. Anne's School is a Catholic co-educational special school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Killaloe.

"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, a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (b) including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; 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. Anne's 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.

St Anne's School aims to exist as a centre of excellence in the education of pupils with a Mild General Learning Disability.

Operating under this policy will ensure continuity and progress in the provision of the most appropriate special school education to pupils in our catchment area with a Mild General Learning Disability, the purpose for which the school was established.

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Anne's School is a special school established in 1973 and caters for pupils from Co. Clare with special educational needs within the range of mild general learning disability, from 4- 18 years of age. *At St. Anne's our school motto is... 'To be all you can be.'*

It is our aim to provide a caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral, emotional and cultural needs of our pupils are identified and addressed. We strive to provide a holistic educational experience for our pupils, to develop all areas including social and personal growth, academic progress and a sense of belonging, both within the school community and the wider community.

The development of self-esteem in our pupils is important, and we celebrate their achievements, individual talents and abilities throughout the school year. While St Anne's is a school with a catholic ethos with the Bishop of Killaloe as patron, it also has due recognition of other religions.

3. Admission Statement

St. Anne's School is a Catholic co-educational special school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Killaloe. St. Anne's School will not discriminate in its admission of a pupil to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil 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. Anne's School is a special school, with the approval of the Minister for Education, provides an education exclusively for pupils with Mild General Learning Disability and/or pupils with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder

St. Anne's School has classes designated to pupils with a diagnosis of Autism. To the extent that IQ scores are used as an indicator of intelligence, children with a Mild General Learning Disability are described as having an IQ range between 50-69. The pupils who have a diagnosis of Autism for enrolment must have an IQ score within this range.

In exceptional circumstances, we do offer placement to pupils in the Borderline of functioning (IQ 70-79), taking into account the pervasiveness and degree of severity of their Autism symptoms. Where it is deemed that St. Anne's School is a viable educational service, we may offer placement to pupils with a Borderline Mild GLD diagnosis for a placement in a designated Mild GLD Special School.

St. Anne's School 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. Anne's 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.

St. Anne's 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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Anne's School is a school which, with the approval of the Minister for Education, provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

Mild GLD Stream

St. Anne's School, with the approval of the Minister for Education, provides an education exclusively for pupils with a mild general learning disability.

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for pupils with Mild GLD when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Mild General Learning Disability (psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report)

AND

- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for placement in a special school catering for pupils with Mild General Learning Disability.

Mild GLD and Autism

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Mild GLD and Autism

AND

- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for Autism.

Dual diagnosis- Moderate GLD and Complex Autism Stream

Our school has been granted two Dual diagnoses - Moderate GLD and Complex Autism Class.

5. Criteria for Admission of Pupils

This school shall admit each pupil seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details)
- b) a parent of a pupil, 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 pupil.

St. Anne's is a special school which provides an education exclusively for pupils with Mild General Learning Disability and may refuse admission to a pupil, where the pupil does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this school.

St. Anne's School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a pupil a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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 of pupils will depend on the number of places in classes for the alternative levels of ability and priority will be given to pupils commencing their education with us in this order:

1. entry classes at early intervention
2. entry classes at primary level
3. entry class for Moderate GLD and complex Autism class (2 classes)
4. entry class for Mild GLD and Autism
5. entry class for post-primary level.

In the event that there are two or more pupils 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 within the catchment area of St. Anne's School includes all of county Clare, parts of south Galway and North Limerick. This area is defined by the transport policy of the Department of Education, where the DE provides transport to the most appropriate school nearest to the residential address of the student when the application is made. Priority will be given to pupils residing closer to the school.
- Children of staff members

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 pupil on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a pupil's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service; including naíonraí, other than in relation to a pupil's prior attendance at—
- (i) an early intervention class
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- a pupil's academic ability, skills or aptitude; (other than in relation to:
- admission to (a) a special school or (b) a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the pupil has the category of special educational needs concerned and/or
- (c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a pupil's parents;
- (d) a requirement that a pupil, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (e) a pupil's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;
- (f) 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Anne's 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 pupil 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's parent/guardian; including, where applicable, details of the pupil's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the pupil'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. Anne's 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 St Anne's 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/guardian of a pupil, 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
- (v) where the applicant does not meet the category of special need catered for in St Anne's School.

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 pupils.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the pupils 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 pupil'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 pupils whose applications for admission to St. Anne's 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 St. Anne's School is in the order of priority assigned to the pupil's 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 pupils 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 pupils to other years and during the school year

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of pupils who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows: pupils will be accepted for admission if there is an available place in an age appropriate class.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St. Anne's 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 pupil to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a pupil in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding pupils not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for pupils, where the parent(s)/guardian(s) have requested that the pupil attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such pupils:

- A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the pupil, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management (BOM)

The parent of the pupil, or in the case of a pupil who has reached the age of 18 years, the pupil, may request the BOM 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.

The BOM 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.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the pupil, or in the case of a pupil who has reached the age of 18 years, the pupil, 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 BOM **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.

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.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Anne's School on 01/10/2024.

Signed: 

Chairperson, Board of Management

