



## **ADMISSION POLICY of MOUNT SION PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**School Address:** BARRACK STREET, WATERFORD CITY, X91 NF77

**Roll Number:** 19947U

**School Patron:** BISHOP of WATERFORD AND LISMORE

### **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 Mount Sion Primary 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 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020. 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 Mount Sion Primary 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.

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**

Mount Sion Primary School is a Catholic all boys' primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.

"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 Mount Sion Primary 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.

### **Mission Statement**

Enlightened by the life of Blessed Edmund Rice  
and in a spirit of partnership  
we will proudly inspire, teach, live and learn  
in a happy, respectful and safe environment  
enabling all to be the best they can be!

Mount Sion was founded by Blessed Edmund Rice, founder of the Irish Christian Brothers, in 1802. The Feast Day of Blessed Edmund is May 5<sup>th</sup>. The present school building was built in 1944, although the school has been on the Barrack Street site continuously since 1804. The school hall was built in 1969. Three classrooms and a general purpose room were added in 1976. The Christian Brothers handed over the Principalship to the first lay Principal in 1998. The Brothers then handed the trusteeship of the school to lay trustees, the Edmund Rice Schools' Trust (ERST) in 2008. Mount Sion Primary School was sanctioned to open two ASD Classes for pupils diagnosed with autism with complex needs in 2017. The first of our two ASD Classes opened in 2017 and the second opened in 2018.

Mount Sion is a Catholic Primary school, which caters for boys only from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class. It operates under the patronage of Most Rev. Dr. Alphonsus Cullinan, Bishop of the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore, and the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools' Trust and it fully supports the religious and educational philosophy of the founder, Edmund Rice. The Board of Management recognizes the role of the Trustees as per Section (2d) of the Education Act 1998. Acting in such a role, the Trustees have the right to be informed of any changes to this Enrolment Policy.

The focus of the school philosophy is the education of the whole child to enable him to reach his full potential. We show special concern for the disadvantaged, respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each person. Conscious of the legacy of Edmund Rice, our school upholds the values and principles of a Christian education in the Catholic tradition.

The Board of Management has adopted the Charter of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. It aims to uphold the Five Key Elements of an Edmund Rice School, these being:

- Nurturing Faith, Christian Spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership

Working together as a school community, the Board of Management, Principal, staff, parents and pupils will strive to provide an environment which will allow all pupils to develop to their maximum potential and fulfil their role in society.

- The school operates within the context and parameters of the DES regulations and programmes.
- The school recognizes the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act of 1998, section 15, (1) and (2).
- The school accepts and supports the religious and educational philosophy of Edmund Rice.
- The school recognizes that it is limited by the funding and resources available to it.

Within this context, the school supports the following underlying principles:

- Inclusiveness: especially with reference to the enrolment of pupils with special educational needs
- Equality of Access: full participation in the school
- Parental choice: in relation to selection of school, having regard to the characteristic spirit of our school
- Respect for diversity: the school respects diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, language and way of life

### **3. Admission Statement**

Mount Sion Primary 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.

Mount Sion Primary School is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

Mount Sion Primary 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.

Mount Sion Primary School is a school which has established two classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provide an education exclusively for students (boys) with a category or categories of special educational needs (ASD) specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to these classes a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

Mount Sion Primary School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established classes to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism (ASD with complex needs). The criteria for entry into these classes are set out in the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Guidelines for Special Classes. Please also refer to our **Admissions Policy for Mount Sion Primary School ASD Classes for 2020/21** for access to these classes.

#### **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.

Mount Sion Primary School provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

Mount Sion Primary School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special classes attached to Mount Sion Primary School provide an education exclusively for students with Autism (ASD with complex needs) 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. The criteria for entry into these classes are set out in the NCSE Guidelines for Special Classes. Please also refer to our Admissions Policy for Mount Sion Primary School ASD Classes for 2020/2021 for access to these classes.

## 6. Oversubscription

**In Mount Sion Primary School a class will be deemed to be full when the total number of pupils in that class equals the prescribed pupil teacher ratio as set down by the Department of Education and Skills. As an urban DEIS Band 1 school the vertical ratio in the school is 22:1. In classes from Junior Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> Class the ratio can be 20:1 and in classes from 3<sup>rd</sup> Class to 6<sup>th</sup> Class the ratio can be 24:1.**

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:**

1. Applicants of brothers currently attending Mount Sion Primary School
2. Applicants who are sons of staff in the school
3. Applicants of brothers who have attended the school
4. Applicants who are sons of past pupils
5. Applicants living in the catchment area
6. Applicants living outside the catchment area

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:

- a. Places will be allocated by age i.e. the older child will be allocated the place
- b. If two children have the same date of birth, random selection, by drawing of lots, will apply

### ***Explanation of drawing of lots:***

1. *This procedure will be carried out by the principal and will be witnessed by two members of the Board of Management.*
2. *The names of the two children concerned will be written on equally sized pieces of paper.*
3. *The principal will write one name and one Board member will write the other name.*
4. *The second Board member will check that the names are written accurately and that the correct names have indeed been written.*
5. *The pieces of paper will be folded by the second Board member so that the names are not visible.*
6. *They are then placed in a container.*
7. *The principal will draw one piece of paper from the container.*
8. *The child whose name is on the piece of paper will be offered the place.*

## 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  
(other than in relation to
  - admission to our special classes 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 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 (1) brother(s) of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) the father or grandfather of a student having attended the school.  
In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice.
- (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 January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 only)

## 8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Mount Sion Primary 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 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#) 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 Mount Sion Primary 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 Mount Sion Primary 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 [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 Mount Sion Primary 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 Mount Sion Primary 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.

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 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.

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 **other than the school's intake group** are as follows:

1. Applications will be considered as per the procedures of this Admissions Policy
2. Any application for a place in a class other than Junior Infants will be dependent on there being a place available in the applicant's requested class.



3. If no place is available in the applicant's requested class, a place may be offered in another class, if such a place is available.
4. Applications will be considered at any time of the school year.
5. In the event that there are more applications for places in a given class than there are places available, **a waiting list will be created and offers of places will be made 'in line with the selection criteria outlined in Section 6 of this Policy'** on a 'first come first served' basis.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The Board of Management of Mount Sion Primary 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 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) 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.

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 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.

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M. Doody, Chairperson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_