

Mount Sion Primary School

Barrack Street, Waterford.

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Roll No: 19947U



SCHOOL ENROLMENT POLICY

Mount Sion C.B.S. Primary 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.*

The Board of Management of Mount Sion Primary School is setting out, in this statement, the policy of the school, in regard to enrolment of children in the school, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

The Board trusts that this statement of policy will be of assistance to parents and guardians in relation to enrolment and is based on principles of fairness and justice.

The Board also wishes to state that the Chairperson and the Principal of the school will be willing to clarify any matters arising from this policy statement.

BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR SCHOOL

Mount Sion was founded by Blessed Edmund Rice, founder of the Irish Christian Brothers, in 1802. The Feast Day of Blessed Edmund is May 5th. 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.

PART 1

a) **The School Profile**

Mount Sion is a Catholic Primary school, which caters for boys only from Junior Infants to 6th 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.

While Mount Sion Primary is a Catholic School, our enrolment policy does not discriminate against non-Catholic applicants. Mount Sion Primary School welcomes boys of all religions and none. The school is managed by a Board of Management, is funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES), augmented by local fundraising, and operates within the guidelines and regulations set down from time to time by that Department. Mount Sion Primary School is designated by the department of Education and Skills as a DEIS Band 1 school.

b) **The Ethos of the School**

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 fulfill their role in society.

PART 2

- 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

School Resources

- The financial resources of the school are provided by a combination of DES grants, capitation grants and fund-raising. The teacher allocation is provided by the DES.
- The implementation of the school's enrolment policy is subject to the financial and teacher resources of the school.
- The school operates within the rules and regulations set down from time to time by the DES. It also follows the curricular programme prescribed by the DES which may be amended from time to time by the DES, in accordance with the Education Act 1998 (Sections 9 and 30).

PART 3 - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of School:	Mount Sion Primary School
Address of School:	Barrack Street, Waterford
School Contact Numbers:	Phone: 051-377947 Fax: 051-358304 E-mail: office.mountsion@gmail.com
Board of Management:	Mr. Michael Doody (Chairman), Mr. Michael Walsh (Principal/Secretary), Mr. Owen Sauvage (Treasurer), Mr. Pat Evans, Ms. Nicola Beresford, Ms. Carolyne Murphy, Ms. Nora O'Byrne, Ms. Tracy O'Connor
School Principal:	Mr. Michael Walsh
Deputy Principal:	Ms. Catherine Burke
School Chaplain:	Fr. Michael Mullins
Support Teachers:	Ms. Catherine Burke, Mr. James Smyth, Ms. Olivia Power, Mr. Brian Wall, Ms. Tracey Barry, Ms. Ciara O'Callaghan, Ms. Emer Corcoran, Ms. Ciara O'Leary, Ms. Nicole Rogers
Class Teachers:	
Jun. Inf.:	Ms. Orla Coffey & Ms. Sinéad Coady Power
Sen Inf.:	Ms. Niamh Butler & Ms. Ruth O'Connor
1st Class:	Ms. Avril Breen & Ms. Orla Maher
2nd Class:	Mr. Dylan Bolger & Mr. Rory Finnegan
3rd Class:	Ms. Claire Tallon & Mr. Micheál Kavanagh
4th Class:	Ms. Lindsay Grace
5th Class:	Ms. Laura O'Brien & Mr. Michael Frisby
6th Class:	Ms. Carolyne Murphy & Mr. Mark Teehan
ASD Classes:	Ms. Sharon O'Connor & Mr. Mark Devereux
Home/School/Community Liaison:	Ms. Sinéad McGailey
Special Needs Assistants:	Ms. Patricia Kavanagh, Ms. Pacelli Cooney, Ms. Elaine Kennedy-Carroll, Ms. Alana Kent, Ms. Alice O'Brien, Ms. Jennifer Guiry, Ms. Angela Crossan, Ms. Caron Beglin, Mr. Michael Power
Play Therapist:	Ms. Elaine Burke (Part-time)
School Secretary:	Ms. Paula Coady
School Caretaker:	Mr. Eddie Wall

Visiting Educationalists:

On occasions, we welcome drama groups, environmental experts, performers, entertainers, musicians, story-tellers, social-awareness groups, sports coaches etc. to the school, to enhance the learning experiences of the pupils.

Opening Times:

9.00 a.m. to 2.40 p.m. (1.40 p.m. for Infants). The school premises will be open to pupils from 30 minutes before official opening time. Pupils must be collected immediately at the relevant closing time. Boys attending extra-curricular activities or After School Club must also be collected immediately at end of activity. If there is any deviation from the usual times of opening or closing, for any reason, every effort will be made to give prior notice of adjusted times to parents or guardians.

We operate an After-School Hour Club for approximately 20 Infant pupils. There is a charge of €10 per week for this optional service. The service is staffed by Ms. Marge Grant and Ms. Dolores Walsh. The service is prioritised for brothers of older pupils, who finish at 2:40pm. Otherwise the service is offered on a first come first served basis. If a parent does not maintain payment the child's place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. This service finishes at 2:40pm.

The School Calendar

The school calendar is drawn up in accordance with the direction of the Department of Education & Skills. Parents or guardians will be supplied with a copy of the calendar. If the calendar has to be adjusted for any reason, parents or guardians will be informed.

The School Curriculum

The school follows the curriculum set down by the Department of Education and Skills, which includes the subjects Irish, English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, Visual Arts, Music, Drama, Physical Education and Social, Personal and Health Education. The Religious Education programme is taught according to the ethos of the school. Swimming is part of the school curriculum. As we do not have a swimming pool, the boys are charged fees towards access to a pool, to swimming instructors and towards transport to a pool. Where and whenever necessary, the curriculum may be differentiated for pupils who have difficulty in accessing the full curriculum. In accordance with the Code of Behaviour of Mount Sion Primary School, where a pupil is placed on a shortened day, the curriculum provision for such a pupil will be adjusted to reflect time in school.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school provides a wide range of artistic, sporting, social and cultural activities, which helps to develop the talents of the pupils in a holistic manner. This provides them with the ability and confidence to be involved in various activities in later life. Development through team games is greatly encouraged in the school. Extra-curricular activities include Gaelic football, hurling, soccer, athletics, basketball, kick-boxing, art, debating choir and quizzes.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Formal Parent/Teacher meetings are held once a year, usually in October (for 1st to 6th Classes) and January (for Infant Classes). Parents and guardians will receive prior notice of the meetings. All parents/guardians are strongly urged to attend, in the best interests of their son. Meetings may be arranged by either parents or teachers to discuss a child's progress throughout the school year. Such meetings will be organised by prior consultation and appointment.

School Functions

Parents and guardians are welcome to attend at any special functions which are organised during the school year. Parents/guardians will be notified of these events.

Fund-Raising

It is necessary for the school to arrange fund-raising events to supplement funding from the DES and other official grants, in order to maintain a high level of service to the needs of our pupils. Parents and guardians are therefore urged to support all our fund-raising efforts, which include the Annual Christmas Raffle and the Fancy-Dress Sponsored Walk. Other fund-raising events will be organized by the Parents' Council. Funds raised by the Parents' Council must be authorised by the Board of Management. Funds raised by the Parents' Council are in the main spent on activities for the pupils.

Parents' Association

The Parents' Association operates under the guidance of the Board of Management. Every parent of a child who is enrolled in Mount Sion Primary School is automatically a member of the Parents' Association. A Parents' Council is elected at the beginning of each school year. The Parents' Council consists where possible of a representative from each class.

Once elected to the Parents' Council, parents work for the betterment of the school and its pupils and take collective responsibility for the decisions of the Council. The Parents' Council meets, on average, 3 times per term. The Parents' Association, directed by the Parents' Council, helps to promote the development of the pupils and assists with various school activities. The Parents' Council can be contacted through the School Office.

PART 4

Enrolment is open to boys from all sections of the community.

A. Application for Enrolment

- The application process is subject to the Data Protection Act (1988 and 2003)
- The Application Form is available from the School Office.
- Application for enrolment in the school is made by completing the school's Application Form and returning it to the School Office.
- The parents of applicant pupils must satisfy the Board as to the nationality, parenthood/guardianship of the pupil applying. In the best interests of applicant pupils, parents/guardians must inform the Board of any custody arrangements in place for the child.
- The completed Application Form must be accompanied by confirmation, in writing, that the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the applicant accept the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- Applications for enrolment for the next school year are made at any time in the preceding school year.
- The Board of Management will consider each application and will convey its decision in writing to the applicant(s) within 21 days, in accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- All applications for enrolment are subject to there being a place available in the school. The number of places available in Junior Infants in any one year is determined by the Pupil/Teacher Ratio as specified by the Department of Education and Skills. This presently stands at 22 : 1.

B. Enrolment

- Parents/Guardians are required to confirm, in writing, their acceptance of a place in the school for their son, by filling in the Acceptance Form. This form should be submitted within 2 weeks of the date of offer of a place.
- Successful applicants may be asked to attend at the school, on a given date, for the purpose of assessment, in order to identify and plan for the educational needs of the pupil.
- New pupils, who have not previously been enrolled in a Primary School, but have reached 4 years of age, will be accepted for enrolment up to September 30th.
- Pupils over the age of 4, who are transferring from another Primary School, will be accepted during the school year on a bona fide change of residence, or in accordance with Section D of this policy.
- Where a child is offered a place, the acceptance of such a place by the child's parents/guardians will be in accordance with the Enrolment Policy of Mount Sion

Primary School. The acceptance of a place is also an acceptance to abide by, adhere to and to co-operate fully with the Code of Behaviour of Mount Sion Primary School.

- The Board of Management reserves the right to defer enrolment of a child pending consultation with others such as other professionals, the Department of Education and Skills, the school's insurers and other relevant persons or agencies.
- It is a school policy that a pupil **may not repeat 6th Class**
- In the event that applications for enrolment exceeds/is expected to exceed the number of places available, the Board of Management will have regard to the following criteria in making any decision on enrolment. Criteria are listed in order of importance and a list of applicants to enroll will be ordered according to the following:
 1. Boys whose brothers are already enrolled in Mount Sion Primary School
 2. Boys attending Mount Sion Pre-School
 3. Sons of staff members
 4. Sons of past pupils or brothers of past pupils
 5. Boys who have been on the waiting list

C. Special Needs Applicants

A separate but integral Admissions policy applies to applicants for places in our ASD Classes. The ASD Admissions policy is available on request.

- The school aims to identify, at an early age, any applicant for enrolment who has special needs, and to become familiar with the specific needs of the child. In making provision for children with special needs, the school needs to know if the child has had access to:
 1. Special Needs Assistant
 2. A special class
 3. Help, for specific needs, from any resource teacher
 4. Assistance with behaviour modification
 5. Psychological assessment
 6. Any additional resources to help with special needs
 7. Help in areas including visual impairment, hearing impairment, learning disability or emotional disturbance
 8. Any resource in relation to travel or mobility.
- Having gathered all the relevant information available, the Board of Management will assess if the needs of the child can be met.
- Where prior evidence of a child's special needs exists and is known to the Board of Management, the Board reserves the right to impress upon parents/guardians the need to engage fully and urgently with assessment procedures, if such assessment is deemed necessary, to avail of resources which can only be allocated by the Department of Education and Skills.
- The school will meet the parents/guardians to discuss the needs of the child and the capability of the school to meet these needs.
- Final enrolment of a child may be deferred pending the receipt of an assessment report and/or pending the provision of appropriate resources by the Department of Education and Skills to meet the needs specified in the Psychological and or Medical Report

D. Transfer of Pupils from Other Schools

- Pupils from other schools may transfer into the school subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The transfer is in accordance with the school's enrolment policy
 - b) The school is satisfied with the reasons for the transfer
 - c) The transfer is in the best interests of the pupil
 - d) All relevant information from the former school is made available
 - e) Space is available in the school to facilitate the transfer
 - f) The Educational Welfare Officer is consulted, if necessary
- Pupils may enrol in Mount Sion Primary School at any time of the year, with the exception of Junior Infants, where enrolment may only take place up to 30th of September thereafter after a period agreed between the Principal and the family of the pupil in question. **Enrolments to 6th Class will only be allowed to 30th of September of the 6th Class year.**
- An application may be refused by the Board of Management on the basis of a class being deemed full. A class may be deemed to be full if the recommended pupil/teacher ratio, as laid down by the DES, is met or exceeded. In such a situation, the Board of Management may offer a place in another class if space is available.

E. Decision-Making Process

- Decisions in relation to enrolments are made by the Board of Management, in accordance with school enrolment policy.
- The Board will have regard to the relevant conditions prescribed by the DES concerning class size, staffing provisions, accommodation, physical space, safety, health and welfare of children and eligibility for enrolment.
- The Board reserves the right to refuse an application for enrolment, in exceptional circumstances, as stated in the Education Act of 1998 (Section 29).
- The Board may refuse to enrol a pupil where such a pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the DES, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education.
- The Board may refuse to enrol a pupil where such a pupil poses unacceptable risk to other pupils, to staff or to school property.
- A pupil may be refused enrolment where the Board of Management finds that the information supplied in the Application Form is untrue or inaccurate.
- The Board may refuse to enrol a child where a parent/guardian refuses to accept the school's Code of Behaviour.
- The Board may refuse to enrol a child where a parent/guardian refuses to accept the school's Ethos.

F.

Appeal Process

- Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, any parent or guardian can appeal a school's refusal to enroll his/her child.
- All appeals under Section 29 and requests for information in relation thereto, should be addressed to the Appeals Administration Unit (C/o The Department of Education and Skills, Portlaoise Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly).
- An appeal will generally not be admitted unless it is made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parent(s) concerned. However, a longer period for making appeals may be allowed, as an exception, where the Appeals Administration Unit is satisfied that circumstances did not permit the making of an appeal within the 42 day limit.
- Appeals should be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeals Application Form and addressed, by signed letter, fax or email to the Appeals Administration Unit. The appellant should, at the same time, notify the school of the appeal or, alternatively, send a copy of the completed Application Form to the school. Where fax or email is used, the appellant should also send a signed copy by post. Appeals Application Forms may be obtained from the school or from the Appeals Administration Unit.
- Any appeal will be processed according to the Procedures for Hearing and Determining Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

This Enrolment Policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Mount Sion Primary School at its meeting on May 11th, 2010. It is subject to a yearly review. Such a review will take place during the last term of each year.

This policy was reviewed, amended and agreed by the Board of Management on 5th April 2017.

Signed: _____
Mr. M. Doody,

Date: _____
Chairman B.O.M

