Admissions Policy

Term 1 School Year 2025-2026

St. Kevin's National School

Admissions Policy

Admission Policy of St. Kevin's National School Philipstown

Roll Number: 18019U

School Patron: Archbishop of Armagh

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 _____. 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. Kevin's N.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 www.stkevinsns.ie and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it from the school office.

2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of the school

St. Kevin's N.S. is a co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin.

"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:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- 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. Kevin's N.S. 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 Statement

Our vision is to be a school that strives to know each child by their name. We aspire to promote the holistic development of all children in our care, and enable them to reach their full potential, as a unique individual in the evolving modern world.

St. Kevin's N.S. has a warm, friendly and caring atmosphere. We welcome all pupils that cross our threshold on a daily basis. We believe that a child will flourish in a place where he/she is happy and feels valued. We seek to nurture each pupil in all facets of his/her life - spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.

St. Kevin's N.S. continues to play an integral role in the parish. We encourage our pupils to have respect for diversity, be environmentally aware and develop an appreciation and love of our special close-knit parish community. In partnership with parents and the Church, we aim to nurture the Catholic faith through religious education, preparation for the sacraments and through our school ethos. In the words of Pope Francis, "the mission of schools is to develop a sense of truth of what is good and beautiful".
While promoting this Catholic Ethos, we acknowledge the importance of providing a welcoming place that is respectful and accommodating of diversity in race, culture, religion, gender and ability.

At St. Kevin's N.S., we recognise that parents are their children's primary educators. Therefore, we strive to empower and encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's education and in the

life of our school. We strive to maintain positive Home-School links and encourage active involvement in the development and growth of the Parents' Association.
We are proud to be an inclusive school that promotes equal opportunity for all. We endorse and promote the Aims and Principles of the Primary School Curriculum, which emphasises the importance of celebrating the uniqueness of each child. We are committed to providing support for pupils with Special Educational Needs. We work together as a team to challenge, inspire and motivate all children to become successful, confident and caring citizens in our evolving modern, multicultural and digitally literate society.

3. Admission Statement

St. Kevin's N.S. 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.

St. Kevin's N.S. 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.

St. Kevin's N.S. 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. Kevin's N.S. 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 Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Kevin's N.S. is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

St. Kevin's N.S. with the approval of the Minister for Education, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of 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 special educational needs (e.g. Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary 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 a special class for autism.

5. Admission of Students

Application Procedures

1. The application process usually takes place in October annually. The exact closing date will be published in our Admission Notice each year. This notice will be published on the school's website at least one week prior to the school commencing our annual admission process.

2. Parents wishing for their children to attend this school should complete the **'Application for Admission to Mainstream Classes' or 'Application for Admission to Special Class'** form as appropriate, using the link provided on our school website www. stkevinsns.ie Parents will be reminded to read the admissions policy and other relevant policies on the school website. A hard copy of policies will also be available on request or may be viewed in the main school office.

3. The application process is initiated by the school on receipt of the relevant online **'Application for Admission'** form and an email with a copy of the child's birth certificate and proof of address.

4. By completing the relevant online **'Application for Admission'** form the date of application, child's date of birth, address and telephone contact numbers are automatically recorded on the school's database (Aladdin Schools). This record of the application merely confirms that the application will be assessed under the criteria outlined below and does not confer any further status on that application.

Please note: *Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage*

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

St. Kevin's N.S. 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 class attached to St. Kevin's N.S., provides an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of Autism 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.

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:

Places in mainstream classes will be decided on the following criteria:

Priority	Criterion
	Siblings of children currently attending or who have previously attended St. Kevin's N.S. (including step-siblings and half-siblings resident at the same address), who have reached the age of 4 years, by 31st March of the year of enrolment.
	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school (subject to a maximum of 25% of available places).
	Children/Step-Children/Foster-Children of current St. Kevin's N.S. staff, who have reached the age of 4 years, by 31st March of the year of enrolment.
	All other applicants living within the parish, who have reached the age of 4 years, by 31st March of the year of enrolment.
	All other applicants living outside the parish, who have reached the age of 4 years, by 31st March of the year of enrolment.
	Any remaining places will be offered to children in the above order whose birthday falls after 31st March of the year of enrolment.

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:

Priority will be given to the oldest child in each criterion.
Please Note: If, in the event that one place is available and the next two children are twins; both will be taken or If, in the event that one place is available and the next two children have the same date of birth or live the same distance from the school; the BOM will draw lots to determine who will be offered the place.

Places in the Autism class will be decided based on the following criteria:

Priority	Criterion
1	Pupils currently enrolled in St. Kevin's N.S. who have been formally diagnosed with Autism and have been recommended as suitable pupils for placement in an Autism class.
2	Siblings of children currently attending and previously attended St. Kevin's N.S. (including step-siblings and half-siblings resident at the same address), who have met the essential criteria mentioned in criterion 1.
3	Children/Step-Children/Foster-Children of current St. Kevin's N.S. staff, who have met the essential criteria mentioned in criterion 1.
4	All other applicants living within the parish at the time of the offer, who have met the essential criteria mentioned in criterion 1. Places will be offered to the child nearest the school by road journey, (priority to oldest), as defined on Google Maps at the time of the offer (proof of address will be required).
5	All other applicants living outside the parish at the time of the offer, who have met the essential criteria mentioned in criterion 1. Places will be offered to the child nearest the school by road journey, (priority to oldest), as defined on Google Maps at the time of the offer (proof of address will be required).

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:

Priority will be given to the oldest child in each criterion.
Please Note: If, in the event that one place is available and the next two children have the same date of birth; the BOM will draw lots to determine who will be offered the place.

Unsuccessful candidates will be placed on a waiting list and will be prioritised in accordance with the criteria outlined above.

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:

1) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at:
   (i) an early intervention class, or
   (ii) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time.
2) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school
3) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to admission to the special class, insofar as it is necessary, in order to ascertain, whether or not the student has the category of Special Educational Needs concerned
4) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
5) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
6) 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, Criterion 1 and 5 as outlined above. In relation to Criterion 5 only parents and grandparents having attended, the school will only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in our school's annual admission notice.
7) 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. However, late applications will affect admission if the school is over subscribed.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Kevin's N.S. 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.
The Board of Management will have regard for the relevant DES guidelines in relation to class size.

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 St. Kevin's N.S. 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 Kevin's N.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 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:

- an application for admission to the school has been received,
- an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- 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 St. Kevin's N.S. 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. Kevin's N.S. 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.

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:

- Parents/Guardians complete the online application form.
- Application will be assessed by the BOM using the criteria in Section 6 of this admissions policy.
- Such applications will be dealt on a case-by-case basis but will normally be only considered for admission on the first day of each new term unless the applicant is newly resident in the area. The Board may also take into consideration information provided concerning attendance and the child's educational progress.
- Admission will depend on space in the required class. Assisting the school in such circumstances,

the BoM reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- *size of /available space in classrooms*
- *educational needs of children of a particular age*
- *multi-grade classes*
- *presence of children with special educational/ behavioural needs*
- *DE maximum class average directives (as determined by the inspectorate)*

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:

The procedures of the school in this instance are the same as is outlined above.
Pupils from other schools may transfer into the school at any time, if they move to a permanent address in the school's catchment area.

However, St. Kevin's N.S. will recommend to applicants seeking places after September 30th of each year and whose children are attending schools in the locality, that where possible, they retain their children in their current schools until the end of the instructional term (i.e. the end of October, December or after Easter).

Before enrolment, the school will require parental consent to contact the previous School Principal, for information on the child's attendance, academic progress and behaviour.

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

This rule applies to <u>all</u> schools.

The board of St. Kevin's N.S. or any persons acting on its behalf will **<u>not</u>** 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

Our school is of Catholic ethos and in keeping with that ethos, children of all or no other faith are welcome to apply.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents/guardians 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:

- Parents/Guardians who wish for their child not to engage with religious instruction must make a written request to the principal of the school.
- A meeting will then be arranged with the parents/guardians to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

Written requests by parents/guardians will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parents/guardians of 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.

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 may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

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.

Review Procedure

The policy will be implemented for the school year 2025-2026 and thereafter will be reviewed by the Board of Management will review this policy in line with the school's cyclical review process or as the need arises.

Policy Ratification

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Kevin's N.S. on _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Principal.

The content of this policy has been approved by _____, acting on behalf of the Patron.